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THE

Broad Stone of Honour:

OR,

THE TRUE SENSE AND PRACTICE OF CHIVALRY.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

The First Book,

GODEFRIDUS.

BY

KENELM HENRY DIGBY, ESQ.

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THE ARGUMENT.

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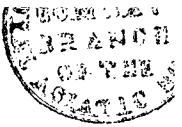

Godefridus.

"Ista studia, si ad imitandos summos viros spectant, ingeniosorum sunt; sin tantummodo ad indicia veteris memoriæ cognoscenda, curiosorum: te autem hortamur omnes, currentem quidem, ut spero, ut eos, quos novisse vis, etiam imitari velis." [1]

It used to form a subject of surprise to a great orator, when treating upon history, that while there are so many works which describe the institutions and laws of knighthood, and so many memorials of its past greatness in all the records and institutions of Europe, there should not be one book composed with a view of giving a philosophic history of chivalry. Such a title, it must be confessed, has a very doubtful sound to those who are reminded of the compositions professedly philosophic in every branch of literature, which were so industriously circulated during the last century: but they who had ever the happiness of hearing the admirable man of whom I speak, whose dissertations were so full of eloquence and poetry, so accommodated to the common sense of all, and to the sweetest harmony of nature, that each of them, like a book of Herodotus, might have been offered under the auspices of a Muse, will feel no hesitation to admit that there is a deficiency in the republic of letters, which may be thus expressed, and which it might be the desire of a real philosopher to remove. It is true, no subject can, at first view, assume an

[1] Cicero de Finibus, lib. V, 2.

aspect of less gravity, or appear farther removed from investigations concerning the intellectual history of man, than that of chivalry; and yet this impression will be found unsupported by any ground of justice. Not to speak at present of the many questions of deep importance to which it may give rise, there is always reason to suppose that a very high degree of interest will be awakened by every inquiry which recalls to the minds of men the manners and the discipline which were bequeathed to them by their ancestors: it might be concluded, that this consideration of itself would be sufficient to bespeak attention, especially when we observe with what delight men visit the scenes which bring back the images of our chivalrous age, even at times when there is no voice to awaken it but the silent eloquence of some ruined tower or of some deserted court, shadowed by the mossed trees that have outlived the eagle. Perhaps, indeed, in the first instance, the presence of such objects may be required to create that degree of attention upon which the success of attempts like the present must depend; and therefore I would invite all persons who propose to follow me in this research, to begin by visiting them, in order that they may gain a vantage-ground, as it were to make silence, and to have the disposition of their minds undisturbed by the objections of the sophists which now infest everything, so that they may engage in youthful meditation fancy free.

"Where do you wish that we should sit down and read this tale of ancient chivalry?" said one of our company, as we walked on a spring morning through the delicious groves that clothe those mountains of Dauphiné which surround the old castle of the family of Bayard. We proposed to turn aside along the banks of the stream, and there sit down in peace. We were all familiar with

Plato, and this spot reminded us forcibly of that charming episode where Phædrus and Socrates are described as congratulating each other on being bare-footed, that they may walk through the water; and our light and careless livery was no impediment to our march to the opposite shore, though the stream was rapid and of considerable depth. Upon the opposite bank we found a lofty chestnut with wide-spreading branches, and beneath it was soft grass and a gentle breeze; and there we sat down: near it were shrubs which formed a dense and lovely thicket; and many of them bearing now a full blossom, the whole place was most fragrant; there was a fountain also under the chestnut, clear and cold, as our feet bore witness; and that nothing might be wanting to remind us of those banks of the Ilissus described by Plato, there were some statues, from which the ancients would have supposed that here too was a spot sacred to the Nymphs and to Achelous. But our Ilissus possessed objects of a higher interest than the memorials of Boreas and Orithyia; for within a few hundred yards of the spot where we sat, lower down the bank, there was an altar and a rustic chapel, embowered in arbutus, where, in the summer season, a priest from the neighbouring monastery used to repair to say the holy mass, and to instruct the shepherd youth who had to watch the flocks during these months in places remote from any habitation of men. Who could describe with what refreshing and delicious sweetness the gentle breeze cooled our temples! The summer song of the ciçadæ had already begun to resound in sweet chorus; the grass was most beautiful and rich with varied flowers. Chaucer used to say, at dawn of day walking in the meadow to see these blossoms spread against the sun was a blissful sight, which softened all his sorrow. From this enamelled bank,

promising to receive so gently the reclining head, we could discern across the river the grey ruins of that majestic castle which recalled so many images of the olden time, and which was distinguished by a name so peculiarly dear to chivalry that it seemed symbolical of the very bent of honour. It was here, then, that we began to read aloud from a certain romantic volume which first inspired me with the desire to study the counsels and to retrace the deeds of chivalry.

II. It is well known, that in times past it was the custom of our ancestors to frame and set forth certain books of examples and doctrines suitable to the various duties of men in the different ranks of life; books which, as St. Gregory says, "while they were to be formed to agree with the quality of particular persons, were yet never to be removed from the art of common edification." The castle had its school as well as the cloister, in which youth was to be instructed

> ——————— in letters, arms,
> Fair mien, discourses, civil exercises,
> And all the blazon of a gentleman;

wherein it should be trained to piety, heroism, loyalty, generosity, and honour; that men might learn to emulate the virtues of their famous ancestors, and as Christian gentlemen, to whom Christendom was a common country, to follow the example of those ancient worthies who were the defenders of the Church, the patrons of the poor, and the glory of their times. It would be idle and presumptuous to remind men that they already possess for their instruction in gentleness and chivalry the deeds of King Arthur and of his knights of the Round Table; of Sir Bevys of Southampton, and Guy of Warwick; the histories of Sir Tristram (no longer the only good knight out of Cornwall),

of Charlemagne and Godfrey of Bouillon; and many other similar volumes in French and English. High stories these; yet, sooth to say, no longer calculated fully to answer the purpose for which they were designed: though the delight of our ancestors, and deemed by them favourable to the increase of virtue, they are but little read by the present race of men, seeing that the language is often hard to be understood—for what they said,

> Thai sayd it in so quaint Inglis,
> That many wote not what it is;

that in some respects chivalry has adopted a different form and imposed new obligations; and that, at all events, the truth of these renowned stories is questioned, albeit that most ingenious printer, who lived in the reign of King Henry the Seventh, was convinced, by many evidences, that "there was a kyng of thys lande named Arthur, and that in all places, Crysten and Hethen, he was reputed and taken for one of the ix worthy and fyrst and chyef of the Cristen men whose deeds may be found in the book[1] which treats upon that noble fellowship"; and Holinshed testifies that "surely such one there was of that name, hardie, and valiaunt in arms, who slew in syngular combats certayne gyaunts that were of passyng force and hugeness of stature." But this will not content men, even though they could see "his sepulture in the Monasterye of Glastyngburye," or "the prynte of his seal at Saynt Edwardes shryne at Westmestre," or even "the round table at Wynchester," or "Sir Gaywayn's sckull in the Castel of Dover." And therefore it might seem a great pity, that, for want of some person to collect what was credible and suitable to the good in the present age, and worthy of

[1] Les neuf Preux: Abbeville, 1487.

acceptance, out of these and other noble histories, and to collect in like manner ensamples and doctrines out of later history, the gentle and heroic deeds of honourable men should be forgotten, their memories sink into the depth and darkness of the earth, and the precious advantage of learning to admire and to emulate such glory, that rich inheritance of a virtuous example, should be lost to ourselves and to our posterity. Wherefore, under the favour and correction of all ingenuous persons, these four books of ensamples and doctrines, forming, as it were, a moral history of the heroic age of Christendom, have been undertaken; and it seemed, that in accordance with the symbolic character which should distinguish all works connected with chivalry, the whole collection might be named "**The Broad Stone of Honour**," seeing that it would be a fortress like that rock upon the Rhine which appears to represent, as it were, knightly perfection, being lofty and free from the infection of a base world. This, indeed, would be lofty, not to represent the height of an arrogant mind, but what St. Bernard calls "the holy and humble elevation of the heart": it would be broad, not in regard to the way that leadeth to it, which, like that of all divine virtue, is known to be so narrow that few can go in thereat, being the narrow way of those who are called to suffering; it is not the broad road of the world, nor the wide gate that leadeth to its false enchantments; this is strait and narrow, rough and craggy, and hard to climb; they who entered it in times past gave but one counsel, "intrate per angustam portam,"—but it is broad in respect to its principles and to its law, "latum mandatum tuum nimis";[1] broad in acknowledging distinctly and broadly the eternal truths of religion,

[1] Ps. 118.

that all men are equal before God; broad in its words, those of plain and holy innocence, and in its sentiments

> Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
> As broad and general as the casing air;
> Not cabin'd cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
> To doubts and fears.

> ——— velut rupes, vastum quæ prodit in æquor,
> Obvia ventorum furiis, expostaque ponto,
> Vim cunctam atque minas perfert cœlique marisque,
> Ipsa immota manens.

Have we not reason, then, to compare it to a majestic and impregnable fortress? In league with God and with the universe, must it not be for ever triumphant? Strong it is in the force of those who protect it; for even the Greek had learned to say, δεινὸς ὃς Θεοὺς σέβει: but a nobler voice proclaims it in a higher strain—"If God be for us, who is against us?" God sends his blessed angels to encamp about them that fear Him; and how secure are they who are under the conduct and protection of those mighty spirits! They may sit down in peace and sing, "Qui habitat in abscondito." Nor is it upon a narrow and barren rock, without means of delight and refreshment, that we are invited to take our stand, to resist the arms of the world. When the wide fields of literature are made the domains of religion, there can be no feeling of confinement; for religion can sanctify all pursuits, and appropriate all beauty to itself. "O quam magna est domus Dei, et ingens locus possessionis ejus! magnus est, et non habet finem, excelsus et immensus."[1] Here are scenes of sylvan beauty, of loveliness and grandeur,

> The gleam, the shadow, and the peace supreme,

[1] Office for Holy Saturday.

the coolness of the grove, the fragrance of the violet-bed, the purity of the limpid wave, the divine excellence of all the innocent creatures of God.

> Hic ver purpureum, varios hic flumina circum
> Fundit humus flores, hic candida populus antro
> Imminet, et lentæ texunt umbracula vites:
> Huc ades; insani feriant sine litora fluctus. . . . .
> Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, virensque
> Hic nemus, hic ipso tecum consumerer ævo.

There are, indeed, two ways marked out in life—the one dark and rugged, in which the wretched Ulysses walked, the other more inviting, which Nestor followed—and Pythagoras was right in saying, that "both may be allotted for virtue."[1] Yet they who enter through this gate will assuredly arrive in the end at the most beautiful regions: generally they pass at once into a life of paradisiacal innocence, and playfulness, and freedom, and joy. The rock is so perfect that it will suffer no one to enter upon it who is not in perfect belief—it breathes an air like that sweetness which awakened Sir Lancelot, when "he was fulfylled with all thynges that he thought on or desyred, and said, 'I wote not in what joye I am, for this joye passeth all erthely joyes that ever I was in.'"[2] They who ascend with persevering ardour, and who mount the summit of this rocky nest, after toiling up the steep and narrow way through which all who have won the prize of excellency and honour, passed in times of old, will at length find themselves in security; they will be received into habitations, which will lead to the accomplishment of all the wishes of the human heart, and to something more: that name which belonged to the Castle of Montiel in the Sierra Morena, which was called the Tower of Stars, might be engraven also over the portal

[1] Stobæi Florileg. I, 38. [2] Morte d'Arthur, II, 297.

here with a high symbolic meaning; for there will be found within this fortress an assembly corresponding with the brightness of those stars which seem to crown its lofty battlements—a procession of angelic spirits, of which an exquisite and perfect emblem may be found in "that host of white-robed pilgrims which travel along the vault of the nightly sky, than whom," as an admirable writer says, "the imagination is unable to conceive anything more quiet, and calm, and unassuming."[1] Moreover, like the enchanted palace of a chivalrous tale, we have only to seek this fortress with purity and faith, and we shall not fail to achieve the high adventure. How must Stephen of Colonna, whom Petrarch loved and reverenced for his heroic spirit, "ex cineribus veterum renatus phœnix," have struck dumb with astonishment the base and impotent assailants who thought indeed that he was at length in their power, and so demanded, with an air of triumph, "Where is now your fortress?" when he laid his hand on his heart and answered, "Here; and one whose strength will laugh a siege to scorn." Similar was the reply of Bias to those who asked him why he did not, like others of his countrymen, load himself with part of his property when all were obliged to fly: "Your wonder is without reason; I am carrying all my treasures with me."

The security and excellence which are found here arise from the possession being unconnected with all that is subject to the rapid course of time: death only translates its guardians, as it were, to that higher capital, upon which this is an humble dependant. Even the ancients felt the need of such an asylum. When Crates the Theban saw men busily employed in rebuilding Thebes, he said,

[1] J. C. Hare.

"For my part, from this time forth, I want a city which no future Alexander can overthrow."[1] "Vanitas est diligere quod cum omni celeritate transit; et illuc non festinare, ubi sempiternum gaudium manet."[2] But no doubt all this is fanciful and romantic extravagance, or, at best, but γενναίαν εὐήθειαν, smelling of the age of Saturn, to infidel philosophists and men of the new wisdom, who know of nothing

> Beyond the senses and their little reign;

and who despise the ancient sentences,

> That virtue and the faculties within
> Are vital,—and that riches are akin
> To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death!

Yet assuredly the object of these books will not be to induce men to follow the mere visions of a romantic imagination, and to desire a strange and enchanted world which exists but in a dream of fancy. No; as Malebranche declares,[3] "It is not into a strange country that such guides conduct you; but it is into your own, in which, very possibly, you may be a stranger." To you perhaps the words of the divine Scripture are addressed—"Inveterasti in terra aliena, coinquinatus es cum mortuis, deputatus es cum descendentibus in infernum. Dereliquisti fontem sapientiæ. Nam si in via Dei ambulasses, habitasses utique in pace super terram. Disce ubi sit sapientia, ubi sit virtus, ubi sit intellectus: ut scias simul ubi sit longiturnitas vitæ et victus, ubi sit lumen oculorum et pax."[4] These images as symbols have a real existence, and are the only objects substantial and unchangeable; whereas, respecting the forms of the material world, independent of these images, that is, of the spirit which vivifies them,

[1] Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. III, c. 6.
[2] De Imitat. Christi, I.
[3] Entret. sur la Métaphys.
[4] Baruch III, 9.

the most knowing of the philosophers are in truth ignorant.

III. In this first book I shall endeavour to give a general idea of the views and principles respecting chivalry which have guided me in the composition of the whole work. And as there will be some express mention of degree and of Christian government, it will be presented under the name of that illustrious hero, Godfrey, whose kingly rule seems to have corresponded with the very ideal of perfection in the social order, and whose personal qualities were so heroic, that, according to an ancient chronicle, an infidel king was heard to say, "Quand tout l'honneur du monde seroit failly et assorbé, que le duc Godefroy est suffisant pour le recouvrer et mettre dessus."[1] The ground being thus prepared, the foundation will be laid in the second book, which will contain a view of the religion and the discipline which belonged to chivalry in the heroic age of Christianity, and the name of Tancred suggests itself as a representative of that spirit. This will unavoidably lead to a consideration of the objections which have been urged by various sects of innovators against the principles and practice of the Christian chivalry; and in the third book, which shall be called Morus, after the great Chancellor of England who laid down his life to defend its glorious standard, these objections will be examined. In the fourth book the main subject will be resumed, by giving a more detailed view of the virtues of the chivalrous character, when it was submitted to the genuine and all-powerful influence of the Catholic faith; and Orlando may be symbolical of this more generous chivalry. The whole, therefore, may be considered

[1] Les Faitz et Gestes du preux Godefroy de Bouillon et de ses chevaleureux Freres, f. 53.

in the light of a history of heroic times, arranged chiefly with a view to convey lessons of surviving and perpetual interest to the generous part of mankind, and occasionally made subservient to considerations of a higher nature than might at first have been expected from the professed object: "sunt enim hæc majora, quæ aliorum causa fortasse complecteris, quam ipsa illa, quorum hæc causa præparantur." [1]

IV. With respect to the advantages to be derived from a work of this nature, it may be well to offer some preliminary remarks. I know, indeed, as Dion Halicarnassus observes in his criticism upon Thucydides, it is a common disposition with men to affirm, that the object of their admiration possesses all the qualities which they wish it to have; but he would greatly err who should imagine that a similar observation could be sufficient to explain the high degree of interest with which many men pursue researches into the history and literature of chivalry. From such studies, even with reference to their immediate and, as it were, external object, they justly expect to derive both pleasure and benefit. In the first place, they serve their country by adorning its peculiar traditions and recollections; preserving alive in the memories of men the magnanimity and greatness of ages that are departed, and cherishing that poetry which lives in every people, until it is stifled by the various and factitious interests of a life devoted to luxury and avarice. As Friedrich Schlegel says, "such national recollections, the noblest inheritance which a people can possess, bestow an advantage which no other riches can supply; for when a people are exalted in their feelings, and ennobled in their own estimation by the consciousness that they have been illustrious in

[1] Cicero de Legibus, I, 10.

ages that are gone by—that these recollections have come down to them from a remote and heroic ancestry;—in a word, that they have a national poetry of their own, we are willing to acknowledge, that their pride is reasonable, and they are raised in our eyes by the same circumstance which gives them elevation in their own."[1]

Such students promote their own advancement in honour by adopting the practice which Scipio said was the characteristic of a great mind, "ut se non cum præsentibus modo, sed cum omnis ævi claris viris comparent,"[2] which preserves them too from being ensnared by a general error of language, "id enim licere dicimus, quod cuique conceditur."[3] It is no small advantage, that by such a study men become acquainted with the character of their ancestors, and of their country itself; for the historical personages, who are made thus to pass in review, are the only real representatives of a nation as of an age; not in consequence of their having obtained any political election or post in peace or war, but like Scipio and Cato, when they held no office and lived in exile, on account of their representing the general mind of their countrymen. In some respects, too, even single examples of this kind are a history of a whole race of men, as Cicero says of Regulus, when he returned to Carthage: "ista laus non est hominis sed temporum."[4] As for the pleasure which is derived from such studies, it may be sufficient to appeal to the common feelings of ingenuous men in every age. "Who is there," cries Cicero, "that does not experience a delight when he hears of the deeds, and sayings, and councils of our ancestors, of the Africani, and of the other brave men who were excellent in every

[1] Hist. of Lit. I, 15.
[2] Liv. lib. XXVIII, 43.
[3] Cicero, Tuscul. V.
[4] Cic. de Officiis, III, 31.

virtue?"[1] With what high feelings did the heroes of Spain look back to Count Fernan Gonzalez of Castile, to the Cid of Valencia, to Gonzalo Fernandez of Andaluzia, to Diego Garcia de Paredes of Estremadura, to Garcia Perez de Vargas of Xeres, to Garcilaso of Toledo, to Don Manuel de Leon of Seville; the reading of whose brave actions instructs and animates the most judicious reader: these are the themes which should be familiar to the heroic men of all ages; as Menelaus says to the young strangers Telemachus and Pisistratus, after alluding to his own history,

καὶ πατέρων τάδε μέλλετ' ἀκουέμεν, οἵ τινες ὑμῖν εἰσίν,[2]

The wise ancients, who resembled the mild old Nestor,

πάλαι πολέμων εὖ εἰδώς,[3]

were of opinion that this personal application of past events, as an extension of private experience, constituted the great end of history, whereby the virtuous might be excited by the prospect of endless renown, and the base (for even their base men had regard to the judgment of posterity) restrained, by fear of incurring the detestation of all future ages."[4] Plutarch observed, that young men were more excited by instructions which had not the austere and laboured tone of the philosophers, but which were conveyed in the way of fables and poetry.[5] Plato said, that he would correct Speusippus by the example of his own life; and Polemon having only beheld Xenocrates in the school, was induced to follow another course of life. Yet heroes were

[1] De Finibus, lib. III, 11.
[2] Od. IV, 93.
[3] Il. IV.
[4] Diodor. Sicul. lib. I, 2.
[5] De Audiendis Poetis.

not to teach others by implying that they were themselves perfect, but, rather, after this manner:

Τυδείδη, τί παθόντε λελάσμεθα θούριδος ἀλκῆς;

thus Socrates corrected young men, not pretending that he did not himself need correction. It may be objected to me hereafter, that I present such a multitude of examples. True; "exemplis abundo, sed illustribus, sed veris, et quibus, nisi fallor, cum delectatione insit auctoritas." As Æschylus says of his own tragedy, "the Seven against Thebes," that whoever beheld it must needs become a hero,

ὁ θεασάμενος πᾶς ἄν τις ἀνὴρ ἠράσθη δᾴϊος εἶναι,[1]

so, it may be hoped, that the once beholding such examples as shall be here exhibited, will be sufficient to strike some shew of fire from the most insensible, and to kindle the spark of ancient honour in every ingenuous breast. For honour is the subject of my story;

οὕτω καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων.[2]

There are examples, as the Roman orator would say, "ex vetere memoria et monumentis ac litteris, plena dignitatis, plena antiquitatis. Hæc enim plurimum solent et auctoritatis habere ad probandum, et jucunditatis ad audiendum."[3] "Hæc imitamini qui dignitatem, qui laudem, qui gloriam quæritis: hæc ampla sunt, hæc divina, hæc immortalia: hæc fama celebrantur, monumentis annalium mandantur, posteritati propagantur." He then adds, "Est labor; non nego: pericula magna; fateor."[4] The Christian view is expressed with

[1] Aristoph. Ranæ.
[2] Il. IX, 524.
[3] Cicero in Verrem, II, III, 90.
[4] Cicero pro P. Sextio.

admirable simplicity by Sir Thomas Malory, in the preface to his own History: "Me thynketh this present boke is ryght necessary often to be redde. For in it shall ye fynde the gracious, knyghtly, and virtuous werre of moost noble knyghtes of the worlde, whereby they gate praysing contynuall. Also me semyth by the oft redying thereof, ye shal gretely desyre to custome yourself in followynge those gracyous knyghtly dedes; that is to saye, to drede Gode, and love ryghtwiseness, feythfully and courageously to serve your soverayne prynce. And the more that God hath geven you the tryumphall honour, the meker ye oughte to be: ever ferying the unstablyness of this dysceyvable worlde." "The love of imitation," says Aristotle, "is in man's nature from his infancy; and herein he differs from other animals, ὅτι μιμητικώτατόν ἐστι." Lord Bacon has pronounced of examples, such as are here submitted to the reader, that they may be of great service "to quicken and strengthen the opinions and persuasions which are true. For reasons," he observes, "plainly delivered, and always after one manner, especially with fine and fastidious minds, enter but heavily and dully; whereas, if they be varied, and have more life and vigour put into them by these forms and insinuations, they cause a stronger apprehension, and many times suddenly win the mind to a resolution." Nay, the manner of conveying knowledge, broken, and not arranged into a system, leaving men often to draw their own reflections, and presenting them only with detached facts, has been approved of by a great philosopher. Certainly, the most complete treatises are not always those which leave on the mind the most just idea of a subject. A rough unfinished sketch has often more spirit and resemblance to the original than the highly wrought painting; a few words often suffice to remind men of the whole truth,—as a long

spear, when shaken from the rest, vibrates to the extreme point, the motion being instantly communicated to the entire wood. It will need but a careless glance upon the scenes which we shall visit to justify our applying to them the words of Manlius Torquatus: "si tot exempla virtutis non movent, nihil umquam movebit." Certainly, the more men reflect upon the noble and joyous images presented in heroic history, the more they will feel themselves confirmed in all those holy feelings which alone can give them dignity and security; the more they will become persuaded that the principles which they illustrate and recommend are the most important that can be made the subject of their study; and that they can be happy and honourable, can obtain the blessing of God Almighty for themselves, for their country, and for mankind, only in proportion as they adhere to them. It is reported, that a Duke of Burgundy "had like to have died of fear at the sight of the nine worthies which a magician shewed him";[1] and a sage was said to have brought before Charlemagne the spectres of Dietrich and his northern companions, armed, sitting on their war-horses, when Dietrich, the most gigantic of the number, leaped from his horse, and was followed by the others, who seated themselves round the emperor's throne. We do not want a magician's skill to bring those heroes before us; nor ought their presence to displease or terrify the brave; it should rather be sought after as an heroic vision, which would shed a lustre over our souls. The Lacedemonian youth, who resembled the great Hector, was crushed to death by the multitude who rushed to see him upon hearing of the resemblance. So should the generous youth of our times hasten to survey the majesty of their heroic ancestors, and to

[1] P. Mathieu, Heroik Life and deplorable Death of Henry IV.

hear those precepts that would make invincible the hearts that conned them. Moreover, as he who beholds a beautiful picture gazes till he ardently wishes to see it move, and exercise the functions with which it seems endowed, so every one who contemplates the noble images of reproachless chivalry must feel anxious that they should be revived in the deeds of men, and must participate in the sentiments of the poetic sage, who was not satisfied after having described his republic, until he could behold in what way it would engage with other states, and how it would shew itself worthy of its education and discipline, in war and peace, as well in utterance as in action.[1]

The study of these heroic pages enables the mind to behold the sons of ancient chivalry, even as if Arthur were, indeed, already come—

> Once more in old heroic pride,
> His barbed courser to bestride,
> His knightly table to restore,
> And brave the tournaments of yore.[2]

We converse with them, we hear them, we follow them to danger and to victory, as

> ——— in a season of calm weather,
> Though inland far we be,
> Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
> Which brought us hither,
> Can in a moment travel thither,
> And see the children sport upon the shore,
> And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Disputations, therefore, which are framed with such views, are not prosecuted for the sake of a theory; for we are invited to engage in them, not to discover what is honourable and good, but, as one of the greatest of the ancients said, ἵν' ἀγαθοὶ γενώμεθα.[3]

[1] Plat. Timæus. [2] Warton's Grave of King Arthur.
[3] Aristot. Ethic. Nicomach. II, 2.

The object in view is not knowledge, but practice. "Vosque adolescentes," said the Roman Orator, "et qui nobiles estis, ad majorum vestrum imitationem excitabo, et qui ingenio et virtute nobilitatem potestis consequi, ad eam rationem, in qua multi homines novi et honore et gloria floruerunt cohortabor." [1]

I know, indeed, as an old German historian says of a later prince, who professed to take Charlemagne for his model, it often happens with men who pretend to follow the example of the excellent worthies of times past, that they sooner learn to cast their shadows than to scatter the lustre of their bright deeds; therefore is there always need of judgment in receiving instruction by example. As in the case of orators, Cicero was obliged to point out, in speaking of the Attic Lysias, that what was Attic in Lysias was not his being slight and unadorned, but his exhibiting nothing dull or extravagant.[2] So should we mark well that the chivalry of our knights did not consist in the hasty violence of their passions, or in their over-eager propensity to war, but in their gentleness and self-devotion. Turenne in his youth, and Alexander in the midst of his glory, both professed to imitate a hero of the ancient world; but with what a different spirit and effect! Turenne mounted and tamed a furious horse to prove himself like Alexander;[3] but Alexander thought to imitate Achilles by dragging the governor of a conquered town tied to the wheels of his chariot.

It was no doubt with a high object that most of the writings connected with chivalry were composed. Practice and virtue were the end proposed by Sir Thomas Malory, who concludes his preface,

[1] Cic. pro P. Sextio. [2] Orator. IX.
[3] Hist. du Viscomte de Turenne, par Ramsay, VI.

"humbly bysechying all noble lordes and ladyes, wyth al other estates, of what estate or degree they been of, that shall see and rede in this book, that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce, and to folowe the same. Wherin they shall fynde many joyous and playsaunt hystories, and noble and renomed actes of humanyte, gentylnesse, and chyvalryes. For herein may be seen noble chyvalrye, curtosye, humanyte, friendlynesse, hardynesse, love, frendshyp, cowardyse, murdre, hate, vertue, and synne. Doo after the good, and leve the evyl, and it shal bryne you to good fame and renommee. Al is wryten for our doctryne, and for to beware that we falle not to vyce ne synne, but to exercise and folowe vertu, by the whyche we may come and atteyne to good fame and renomme in thys lyf, and after thys shorte and transytorye lyf to come unto everlastynge blysse in heven, the whyche he graunt us that reygneth in heven, the blessed Trynyte. Amen."[1]

V. In collecting and disposing examples and doctrines from divers noble volumes, I have not confined myself to the records of English history; for, although these alone would no doubt have furnished ample matter for a far more complete survey than the present, such a restraint would in some measure have been at variance with the object of my enterprise, since it has always been the spirit of chivalry, as it was in ancient times of Pythagoras, "ut unus fiat ex pluribus,"—insomuch that it should ever be the desire of those who admire it, to connect, by ties of mutual affection and respect, the virtuous of every country.

Polybius, that illustrious soldier and historian, has furnished me with a similar lesson touching the duties of my ministerial office; for he affirms that

[1] Preface to Mort d'Arthur.

we must often praise our enemies, and dress up their actions to be the objects of the highest admiration; and that, on the other hand, there may be occasions when we shall have to censure and loudly condemn our friends and those who are upon our side.

England was at one time the very land of chivalry and of all its heroic exercises. La Colombiere has remarked, that the greatest number of the old romances have been more particularly employed in celebrating the valour of the knights of this kingdom than that of any other, because, in fact, they have always, in an especial manner, loved such exercises. The early French romances were written for the amusement not of the French but of the English nation.[1] The romances of Perceforest, Merlin, Lancelot, Gawain, Meliadus, Tristan de Leonnois, Giron le Courtois, Isaïe le Triste, the Palmerin of England, and many others are quite filled with their prowess.[2] "Moult ay ouy parler de ceste isle de Bretaigne et l'ay ouy tenir a grant chose, et fort estimer a cause de sa bonne chevalerie;" this is what a knight says in Perceforest.[3] "The city of London," says the author of the Palmerin of England, "contained in those days all, or the greater part of the chivalry of the world." Again, in Perceforest, when Sorus said he was a native of Great Britain, the young Demoiselle Lugerne said, "Sire chevalier, je parle volontiers a vous pour ce que vous estes de la grant Bretaigne: car c'est ung pays que j'ayme bien pour ce qu'il y a coustumierement la meilleure chevalerie du monde; c'est le pays au monde, si comme je croy, le plus remply d' esbas et joyeulx passetemps pour toutes gentilles pucelles et jeunes

[1] Dunlop, Hist. of Fiction.
[2] Theatre d'Honneur et de Chevalerie, I, 223.
[3] Tom. I, c. 21.

bacheliers qui pretendent a honneur de chevalerie."[1]

Perhaps this character will account for the statement advanced by Diodorus, that against the British isles not one of the ancient heroes, neither Bacchus nor Hercules, ever made war.[2] Our Christian chivalry recollected with greater pleasure, that the first Christian king and the first Christian emperor were natives of England; the first the very emblem of the highest chivalry, adorned with its crown of majesty, and devoting himself to religion; for Lucius is said, by the German historians, to have gone abroad a little before his death, and to have preached the Gospel in Bavaria and the Grisons. Notwithstanding so many titles to pre-eminence in the list of chivalry, it will perhaps be found that the examples and sources of honour held forth in these disputations will be oftener derived from foreign lands than from our own.

This may partly be accounted for by stating the fact, which it would be vain to deny, that it is more difficult to collect instances of the kind required from our English histories than from those of the Catholic nations of Europe.

In the barbarous dissolution of the religious houses, which led to such a destruction of libraries, that part of the literature of chivalry, which was chiefly interesting to religion from its being concerned with the devotion of our national heroes, was almost wholly lost; for in England, as in every other Catholic country, each monastery had registers, from the date of its foundation, recording the lives of all the eminent men who had become celebrated in the particular province where it was situated; and it is from these sources that men compiled those admirable biographical memoirs

[1] Perceforest, vol. VI. [2] Lib. XXI.

which form so interesting a part of the literature of other nations.[1] The later writers of England, having embraced the new opinions, had no desire to preserve examples of the ancient piety, which they either omitted altogether, or disfigured through the prejudices of their sect; while Catholic writers, the Hardings, Sanders, Stapletons, Allens, Bristowes, Reynolds, Persons, Walsinghams, and Pattisons, were too much occupied in defending religion to have leisure to write the lives of heroes.

> England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
> Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
> Of watery Neptune,

is always to be spoken of with affection and reverence, and treated as a mother; for, though many of us have two countries, that which gave us birth, and that which has become the ruling state to which we are subject, yet, in some respects, it is necessary, as Cicero says, "caritate eam præstare qua reipublicæ nomen universæ civitatis est."[2] Nevertheless, there are many persons who need not be reminded, that times were when we might say in England, referring to other facts besides our geographical place,

οἰκέομεν δ' ἀπάνευθε, πολυκλύστῳ ἐνὶ πόντῳ.[3]

"Alas! poor country! almost afraid to know itself, where nothing but who knew nothing was once seen to smile!" Oh, what a ruin was here of all that could support and guide chivalry! Outraged by a barbarous tyrant, betrayed by some of her powerful nobles, enticed and deceived by a few daring innovators, exposed to the multiplied dangers which, by a concourse of unparalleled

[1] Rubichon de l'Action du Clergé, p. 257.
[2] De Legibus, II, 2.
[3] Od. VI, 204.

events, were made to result from a state in which the mass of the people were prepared to love and believe, rather than to dispute and defend their faith,—this knightly, this illustrious island fell into that schism which separated her from the body of the faithful, and lost that most precious gift which any people can possess—the Catholic faith.

Since that time, agitated by a thousand factions, divided amongst all sects, she has looked for happiness, and found riches and commercial prosperity, in neither of which does chivalry any more than religion take any great interest. Therefore, either the ancient spirit of England was to be abandoned, and with it the whole object of these books, or else it was necessary to take quite a different course from that of the later philosophers of this country, with whom, as Friedrich Schlegel says, "national welfare is the ruling and central principle of thought;" a principle excellent and praiseworthy in its due situation, but quite unfitted for being the centre and oracle of all knowledge and science, of all honour and chivalry.

But besides this circumstance, there is a general principle which might have required a preponderance of foreign examples, from whose influence it would have been difficult to escape.

The "major e longinquo reverentia," is an observation well known to the most humble follower of the Muse; it is deeply founded in nature, and peculiarly congenial to the disposition of chivalry. Of all the Grecian princes who went to Troy, Ulysses was from the country most remote from the land of Homer. The heroes of the Athenian tragic drama, the Pelopidæ and the Labdacidæ, were all foreigners. Pausanias remarks that the Greeks must always have more admired the wonders of foreign countries than of their own; since their most celebrated historians have described the pyra-

mids of Egypt with the greatest exactness, and have said nothing of the royal Treasury of Minyas, nor of the walls of Tiryns, no less admirable than the pyramids.[1] The same remark is applicable to later poets; Shakespeare shews a decided predilection for foreign lands and names.

VI. It is one of the old sayings ascribed to Pythagoras, that he who exclusively exercises his mind from youth in mathematical reasoning and in the exact sciences will be deficient in wisdom.[2] Friedrich Schlegel treats, in an admirable manner, upon the power of the imagination, in conducing to good as well as evil. "This beautiful sentiment of desire in youth, a fruitful imagination, a soul full of love, are the highest gifts of all-loving bountiful nature, or rather of the wonderful spirit which moves in it. They form, in a manner, a flowery garden of a hidden life in the interior of men; but, as in the case of the first man, who was placed in the garden of the earth not merely for idle enjoyment, but in order that he might till and plant it, so it is with this spiritual garden; and when this duty is neglected, the interior of men, which ought to be admirable and enriched with the choicest gifts of nature, becomes only a wild paradise."[3] "The harmony of the soul," he says elsewhere, "is produced by the union and co-operation of the ordaining and comparing reason with the endless anticipating fancy. Fancy is the peculiar characteristic of man, in distinction to all other spiritual natures; for reason, as a naked negative power, can only furnish a negative sign of the difference between him and irrational brutes."[4] These are principles which were not unknown to the wise ancients. Plato finds in the chorus of Muses the

[1] Lib. IX, 36.
[2] Stobæi Florileg. I, 108.
[3] Philosophie des Lebens, p. 48.
[4] Id. p. 159.

proper education for boys; he refers all under thirty to the pæan, and says that from that age until sixty men should continue to be familiar with song, but that after this date they are no longer able to hear the ode, and must therefore take refuge in other sources.[1] The nature of all youth being impatient of rest in body and mind, rhythm must regulate the motions of the limbs, and harmony the voice. Plato would have the poets employed by legislators to lead men by their poetry to follow justice. As the sick are cured by remedies which are purposely rendered sweet to the palate, so should the wise framer of laws persuade and compel the poets to announce rightly, in rhythms and melodious accents, the forms of justice and valour and whatever belongs to good men; and he ought to take care that no poet should teach that there are any wicked men who live pleasantly, and that profit and gain are one thing, but justice is another; for I maintain, that the things which are called evils are benefits to evil men, though evil to the good; whereas good things, though good to the good, are evil to evil men; for to evil men all things are evil, beginning with health: and this identity of the sweets of life with virtue should be continually repeated and proclaimed by all people, in odes and symbols and fables.[2] Plutarch therefore recommends poems to all who would study philosophy, adding ἐν ποιήμασι προσφιλοσοφητέον.[3]

This principle seems to form the grand distinction in all ages, between men who follow wisdom, and the reasoning sophists who in ancient times would have brought Homer into forgetfulness, if their opinions had prevailed over those of Solon and the Pisistratidæ, the preservers of Homer, as they had already done every thing that lay in their

[1] Leges, II. [2] Ib. II. [3] De Audiendis Poetis.

power to bring him into contempt; and who objected to Plato, that he was unintelligible and too poetical in his prose;[1] and who have been seen anxiously employed in a later period in endeavouring to kill, by their poison of impurity, the imagination of youth, and to extinguish every sentiment of spiritual beauty. Hence, in the judgment of wise antiquity, and in the absence of more full and efficacious sources of truth, poets were men of a divine and holy character.

It was observed that Ulysses escaped from the Syrens by causing all the ears of his company to be stuffed with wax, and himself to be bound; but a more noble and excellent mode of avoiding the wounds of life seemed to be pointed out by Orpheus, who disdained to be bound, and was able to suppress the songs of the Syrens, and to free himself from their danger, by merely singing the praises of the gods with a sweet voice; to shew, as a great philosopher observes, that divine poetry does not only in power subdue all sensual pleasures, but also far exceeds them in sweetness and delight. "Every thing else," says Cicero, "may be obtained by precepts and study; but a poet must be formed by nature and by a divine spirit. Therefore poets were called holy. The rocks and solitary deserts are found to give an answer to the voice; cruel beasts are frequently subdued by song; and shall we, trained up in gentle studies, be deaf and insensible to the voice of poets? Dear was our Ennius to Africanus; so that it is said he stood in marble even in the sepulchre of the Scipios. Armed commanders worshipped the name of poets and the temples of the Muses. Alexander, when he stood over the tomb of Achilles, said, 'O happy youth, who had Homer to be the herald of your virtues!'

[1] Dion. Halicarnass. Epist. ad Cn. Pomp.

And he said justly; for if it had not been for the existence of that Iliad, the same tumulus which covered his body would also have buried his name."[1]

To this sense of the importance of the imagination as an instrument of the greatest moral good or evil, much that is interesting in the manners and institutions of the ancients is to be ascribed. For instance, Plutarch, after saying that the troubled life of cities is injurious to the study of philosophy, and that solitude is the school of wisdom—ἡ δ' ἐρημία, σοφίας οὖσα γυμνάσιον—that it corrects and directs the soul of man, continues to shew, "that the pure air and aspect of the country, and the absence of all disturbance from within, and constant peace, conduce to the instruction and purification of the soul. On this account also," he adds, "the temples of the gods, as many as were constructed in ancient times, were always in solitary places, especially the temples of the Muses and of Pan, of the Nymphs, and of Apollo, and of as many as were guides of harmony; judging, I suppose, that cities were necessarily fearful and polluted places for the education of youth."[2] Without doubt the interests of virtue require that discretion and judgment should attend upon the exercise of the imagination. It is with poetry as with music; a spurious order flatters and corrupts men. When the Dorians, having left their country and their rustic Muse, which they had been accustomed to follow among flocks and herds, began to relish new sounds of flutes and dances, they corrupted, at the same time, says Maximus of Tyre, "their music and their virtue."[3] We must endeavour, in our future wanderings, to guard against this evil, lest, through an error, my zeal should be only deceiving both myself

[1] Pro Archia Poeta. [2] Stobæi Florileg. II, 424.
[3] Dissert. XX, 8.

and others, and "so I should fly away like a bee, leaving a sting behind."[1] The Muses are so called, says Plutarch, from being united in concord, ὁμοῦ οὖσαι. Poetry is a speaking picture, and a picture is silent poetry.[2] Various forms and tones shall be here; yet, it is hoped, without a breach of the sacred union and fellowship which belongs to all truth and excellence. The ancients observed, that there were tones of music requisite for particular seasons: the Orthion for war, the Paroenion for times of festivity; that the Embaterion suited Lacedemonians, but not Athenians; that the Enceleusticon was for pursuit, the Anacleticon for him who retreated.[3] In the chorus of the Muses, Clio was so called from presiding over poetry relative to glory, being in praise of renowned men; Euterpe, from the pleasure produced by a virtuous education; Thalia, from causing men's actions to flourish for ever in poetry; Urania, from enabling men to rise to heaven.[4] I have endeavoured that these books should be also diversified in tone, and should contain symbols not inapplicable to the harmonious choir, so as to exhibit that kind of social chain by which, according to the just notions of the Platonicians, all the learning of ingenuous arts is united.[5] For this purpose, I have gathered from the stores of both ancient and modern literature, without affecting to present original and self-grown fruits; of which, perhaps, after all, the scarcity is greater than many are inclined to suppose, since even Homer is said to have stolen many verses from Daphne, the Sibyl priestess of Apollo, in the temple of Delphi, and to have enriched his own poems with them.[6] I have endeavoured to shew the fountains whence the lovers of chivalry

[1] Plat. Phædo.
[2] De Audiendis Poetis.
[3] Max. Tyr. XXIII, 5.
[4] Diodor. Sicul. IV.
[5] Cicero de Oratore, III, 6.
[6] Diodor. Sicul. lib. IV, 66.

may draw refreshment, and to mark the tract and the journeys, not as being myself a guide, but that I may only indicate the direction, and, as it were, point towards the living springs. It is a great advantage attending all the stages of this high quest, that there is no need of a voice to direct those who undertake it; for here things, which cannot lie, have a voice which is audible to men, unlike the treacherous accents of the tongue, deceiving and deceived.[1] Here, it is hoped, the analogy of nature may be discernible in the arrangement of forms, regarded under the light of faith. There is no cutting off and dividing into separate departments the scenes and acts of human life, which can only be enjoyed fully when viewed as parts of the whole. In this I have only followed the plan of the romantic writers of chivalry. Observe these passages in the heroic poems of antiquity, says Friedrich Schlegel, "or in the chivalrous romances of the middle age, which afford glimpses of the simplicity and repose of rural manners. Their simplicity appears still more innocent, and their repose still more peaceful, from the situation in which they are placed—in the midst of the tumult of wars and the fierce passions of heroes. Every thing appears in its true and natural connexion, and the poetry is as varied as the world."[2]

VII. A modern French writer, who endeavoured to keep alive the spirit which belonged to the literature of his country at the close of the eighteenth century, says on one occasion, that under certain points of view the history of the past possesses some degree of the interest which belongs to the present. "Behold," he says, "its real and great

[1] Valckenær. Diatrib. in Euripid. p. 265.
[2] Hist. of Lit. I, 104.

attraction; that which sweetens these severe and dry studies."[1] I need hardly observe, that it is with a very different feeling the lovers of chivalry look back upon times gone by. With them, perhaps, the converse of the Frenchman's proposition is sometimes true, that the present is only to be endured by means of those studies which appeared to him so severe and dry. The Greeks called the Muses the daughters of memory; for "it is the nature of the imagination to be retrospective much rather than prospective."[2] The habit of preferring one's self and the present to whatever is ancient, degrades the nature of man, and, as Laurentie justly says, "leaves the genius without development and without enthusiasm."[3] "With what discourses should we feed our souls?" asks the Platonic philosopher. "With those that lead the mind *ἐπὶ τὸν πρόσθιν χρόνον*, and which can give it a view of the deeds of past ages."[4]

Isocrates, in his discourse on peace, contrasts the ancients with his contemporaries, to inspire the latter, not with confidence, but with emulation. Demosthenes does the same in his Philippics, where he alludes to the simplicity of the ancient heroes, Aristides and Miltiades; and above all, in his immortal speech on the crown, where he begins, *τίς γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ἀγάσαιτο τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων τῆς ἀρετῆς*; Isocrates, indeed, draws a delightful portrait of the ancients in his panegyric; but the wise critic of antiquity does not condemn him for exaggerating the praise of past times, but shews the proper inference, saying, "Who does not burn with love for his country after reading this discourse, which describes the virtues of the ancient Greeks who

[1] Thierry, Hist. de la Conquête, IV, 142.
[2] Guesses at Truth.
[3] De l'Etude et de l'Enseignement des Lettres.
[4] Max. Tyr. Dissert. XXVIII, 5.

defended their country against the barbarians?"[1] Livy deemed it an ample reward for his labours that they enabled him to lose sight of the evils of his own age, in keeping before his mind the manners and events of the olden times of Rome. Cicero wrote many things, not so much with the hope of benefiting his own age, of which he could only despair, as of delivering himself from the misery of conversing with it: escaping from the present, it was his endeavour that he might live and converse with the men of former times.[2] Perhaps it might be stated, as the general fortune which attends upon all heroic spirits, that in consequence of the character of the age to which they fall, they are obliged to take shelter in the shadows of the majestic past, and to live and converse with them; that they feel constrained to fly from the presence of a world which oppresses them with the sense of intolerable wrong, their soul responding to the cry of nature, being sick of man's unkindness. Tasso published his Jerusalem Delivered so late as in 1581. He then stood alone, as a fine writer says, "like an image of ancient times in the midst of a fallen generation." Nothing is more worthy of astonishment in Shakspeare than the power which his genius must have exerted to escape from the influence of the calamitous age in which he lived, which was possessed with so insane an enmity to all former things, that he speaks of his country at that time as being the reputed land of madmen.[3] He fed his soul with the lofty thoughts which belonged to times gone by, disdaining to taste "those subtleties of the Isle which would not have let him believe things certain."

I shall pass over the observations which might

[1] Dion. Halicarnass. [2] De Reb. Fam. Epist. VI, 4.
[3] Hamlet, act V, s. 1.

be made on the metaphysical causes which dispose great and good minds in every age to reverence antiquity; and I shall pause awhile to remark how far those who form part of the present race of men have particular motives to give their studies and minds this direction. I am not ignorant that there are some who say, with a French writer of the day, "we hesitate not to repeat the boast of Sthenelus, and apply it to ourselves: thank Heaven, we are infinitely better than our forefathers." [1] Though Plutarch would have reminded them that Sthenelus was an ignoble fellow, and that this very sentence is an instance of Homer's profound knowledge of men, who ascribed it to him as suitable to his character, and that it is, therefore, an evidence of the benefit which youth may derive from his poetry, by shewing how he distinguishes base and vile persons from those of a generous and noble nature.[2] But it must be confessed that such an opinion of present superiority not only upon general principles, as indicating the absence of those qualities which belong to intellectual greatness, but also with reference to the particular ground on which it is now advanced, can have no place among the sentiments which belong to chivalry in our age. To accuse and condemn is at all times an office most at variance with the disposition of wisdom; it knows well that "perpetual sober Heaven has often to forgive our general and exceptless rashness"; but, at the same time, although it is fond to wail inevitable strokes, wisdom does not diminish susceptibility, nor confine the judgment. The Christian philosophy opens a new field for thought to range when moved by the pressure of events, and affords a light to those who seem like belated wanderers in the human course,

[1] Guizot, Cours d'Hist. Mod. p. 32.
[2] De Audiendis Poetis.

who then behold the rugged scenes and fierce aspects of men around them softened by the mild influence of its gentle beam. Livy relates, that upon one occasion a certain measure was approved of by a majority of the senate, and adds, "Nevertheless the old men, and those who remembered the ancient discipline, denied that they could trace the Roman arts in that legation; the new wisdom did not please them: however, the other part of the senate prevailed, who had more regard to utility than to honour."[1] This seems to describe a period which has occurred in various stages of the world's history. Hereafter the system and character of later ages with respect to the great lines which separate them from Christian antiquity will be pressed upon our attention; at present it may be only necessary to notice some of the more general and outward obstacles which the innovation effected by them in the moral world will offer to our proposed course.

In the first place, the religion and philosophy of many men having been moulded upon new principles, their whole disposition of mind and rule of conduct are at variance with the sentiments and actions of that class of mankind which naturally belongs to chivalry according to the theory which shall be shortly laid down. The moderns have learned to spell honour in a new way, if they do not know how to practise it; and they can appeal to its laws, when they do outrage to its spirit: they can quote honour to sanction their performing a deed of foul dishonour, of which I shall not give a recent instance, lest I should reveal mysteries: they can write with as much ease upon the philosophy of Plato as upon fireworks and harlequin. To make no mention of those guides who, as the Roman moralist said of flagitious persons, are not to be

[1] Lib. XLII, 47.

fatigued with words and the disputation of philosophers, but with chains and imprisonment, let us confine our attention to instances of outrage to the more delicate sentiments of the heroic soul, which, from their being rather symbolical than exemplifications of the evil which we fear to name, are more within the compass of our present argument. Who has not heard of those old Greek mounds or monuments which were, according to universal tradition, pointed out as the graves of Achilles and Patroclus, over one of which Alexander wept, envying the fate of the hero who had found a Homer to celebrate him? It was high diversion for the men of our age to ransack these tombs, and violate the sacred repose of the ashes and arms of heroes which were found within their recesses.[1] The same spirit was more recently employed in breaking open the vaults of an ancient church, where the shrine of a great Saxon saint was piously visited by those of the family of Christ who occasionally appeared on their passage there. From the mere desire to wound the feelings of Catholics, or to disprove what was supposed to be their faith, it was resolved that his canonised bones, hearsed in death, should burst their cerements; that the sepulchre wherein we believed him quietly inurned should be forced to open its ponderous and marble jaws to cast him up again. Perhaps, indeed, while the great infectious wounds of the moral world are exposed before us on every side, it may seem trifling to expend thoughts upon these acts, of which we can only say that they have no relish of ancient piety in them; but if the lesser evils are fraught with such sorrow, who can find courage to unfold the greater? And, after all, it is only to the superficial eye that these things

[1] Fr. Schlegel, Hist. of Lit. I, 32.

appear rather contrary to the ornament than to the health and life of the soul.

There are men, and in some countries they form no small portion of society, who seem destitute of all spiritual elevation, who neither conceive good themselves nor consent to those who can; men of earthly tempers, unconscious of the enjoyment derived from the high faculties of the soul; who are ready to affirm with Cyclops in the play,

> *ὁ πλοῦτος, ἀνθρωπίσκε, τοῖς σοφοῖς θεός·*
> *τὰ δ' ἄλλα κόμποι καὶ λόγων εὐμορφίαι·*

who, "fruges consumere nati," appear to be susceptible of no pleasure but that of providing against the present and possible evils incident to mere animal existence, and who may be truly said, in the language of the poet,

> ——— propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.

They are symbolically represented by the genius of Cervantes in the person of that famous squire, "who wanders amidst sierras and moonlight forests, and glides on the beautiful stream of the Ebro, without forgetting, for a moment, the hope of pelf that had drawn him from his village": men before whom an apology must be offered for virtue, in the fatness of whose pursy courts "Virtue herself must pardon beg, yea, curb and woo for leave to do them good." There are men also who make a separation between the heart and the head; who teach as an axiom in philosophy, that self-love and self-interest are the operative principles of the soul, and who logically conclude, that the chivalrous mode of existence is but the dream of an excited imagination; men who trust to dry mathematical reason, which Cudworth justly says is incapable of giving an assurance of truth to men "possessing minds unpurified, and

having a contrary interest of carnality, and a heavy load of infidelity and distrust sinking them down." In their eyes there is nothing admirable but ability, nothing in virtue but what is derived from calculation of expediency; they refer to matter and the senses every thing but the dry skeleton of operations in the brain, and they regard all objects of study and observation, history, romance, poetry, painting, the beauties of nature, and architecture, as fit for no other purpose but that of exercising and displaying the rational faculty; and hence they hold themselves privileged by their acknowledged ability, to play with the imagination, and to mock the elevated sentiments of the chivalrous part of mankind. Speak to them of history—they are concerned with dates and controversies, with speculations and political theories, with making out St. Dunstan to be a ventriloquist, and Alexander the Great a commercial statesman; they proceed "more hominum vellentium spinas et ossa nudantium," and shew clearly that the father of history could not multiply;[1] perhaps admiring antiquity, but only its bones, not its blood and spirit; or there is a sequel at the heels of this admiration which gives it an air of insult; or praising the ancients, but using other manners; or, explaining history by contraries, throughout they affirm

> That from the Trojan bands the Grecian ran,
> And deem Penelope a courtesan.[2]

Speak again of romance—they offer their vapid interpretations of a poetical story: Roland is a prefect of the British frontier; Arthur, the son of Uthyr Pendragon, is Arcturus or the great bear. The account of Æneas's descent into hell should be omitted in a translation of the Æneid, "as a tale

[1] Herod. lib. I, 32. [2] Orlando Furioso, XXXV.

manifestly forged, and not to be believed by any rational reader." "Dante's poem is in truth a satirical history of his own times." King Arthur's round table is a symbol of the horrible mystery of iniquity. They pretend, upon the data of refined selfishness, and by submitting the inducements of persons to the operations of arithmetic, to account for the development, and to explain the movements of human passions. Speak of poetry and literature —they are only careful to determine between the classical and romantic schools. Of music—they know the theory of vibrations, and by a mathematical process they can determine the exact relations of concordant and discordant sounds, but the internal harmony, the precious music of the heart, they have, they know, it not. Or speak to them

> Of scenery—the tall rock,
> The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
> Their colours and their forms;

which were to the poet in his youth

> An appetite, a feeling and a love,
> That had no need of a remoter charm
> By thought supplied, or any interest
> Unborrowed from the eye;

and when that time was past, which then did nourish feelings of delight and peace, of

> ——————— a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man—

such as kindled into rapture the heart of Fénélon, when he exclaimed, "How miserable are those who do not feel the charm of that picture!"

> Fortunate senex, hic inter flumina nota
> Et fontes sacros frigus captabis opacum:

speak of this, I say, and they will perhaps confess that these are lovely and magnificent objects, but they will at the same time caution you against being impressed by a false notion of the happiness which they seem to inspire. "The Eclogues of Virgil," they will tell you, "represent neither what is nor what ought to be; but rather the dreams of happiness which the view of the country excites—the simplicity, the sweetness, the innocence, which we love to contrast with our habitual state."[1] Speak to them of architecture—this too they have studied as a science. If they do not detect the gnostic hand and trace the mystery of abomination in every rose-carved buttress, they at least are convinced by the appearance of our old Cathedrals, that nothing can be more extravagant than the Gothic monuments, which prove the barbarity and darkness of the middle ages. Draw them to a higher ground, and speak of all the elevated and generous dictates of chivalry, and demand why, upon such an occasion, they are not actually practised; they have a ready answer to silence all further objections—a kind of organ like that of the torpedo, which stupifies whatever it touches,—"My dear friend, beware of cant." It is right, that while I furnish you with amusement, you should supply me with money; and I hope, as Locke says in his epistle to the reader, "thou wilt as little think thy money, as I do my pains, ill bestowed." "Quelle odeur de magasin!" cries the Count de Maistre. They are like the foolish poet that Horace tells of.[2] Let them but have money for rehearsing their comedy, they care

[1] Dr. Johnson, in the Idler, gives a sarcastic picture of the happiness of an Arcadian life, which proves nothing but his own melancholy want of taste and feeling: he would have sent Isaac out to meditate, not "in the field at even-tide," but into Fleet Street in the bustle and heat of the day!

[2] Ep. 2, I, 175.

not about the rest. "Manners too stately and pure for humanity," they proceed to observe, "are not for this world." These may be delightful images to divert your intervals of leisure: the mind requires relaxation after intense labours in scientific and mercantile pursuits. The mathematician, the economist, and the man of business, must provide some indulgence of this kind; but you are not to suppose that they have anything to do with common life, or that they furnish fit rules and examples of conduct; that they are to interfere with your desire of gaining money, the proper compensation for labour, or interest, leading to the substantial and real good of this world. Endowed with versatile genius (this it would be affectation to deny), we have composed histories and romances, where you will see represented, in more charming colours than your imagination could have conceived, all these indefinable objects of your enthusiastic attachment. Here is chivalry in all its flower and pride, in all its boasted independence, generosity, fidelity, and heroism. What more can you desire—can you conceive? But

—— paulum a turba seductior, audi,

it is all a delusion, it is all an idle vision, made to amuse and unbend the intellectual faculties of our weak nature: must you not submit to our judgment, you who could never have described these things so well, or have given them half that appearance of reality which they derive from our pencil?

O curvæ in terras animæ, et cœlestium inanes!

Oh, the vain pride of mere intellectual ability? how worthless, how contemptible, when contrasted with the riches of the heart, with "the feeling soul's divinest glow!" What is the understanding, the hard dry capacity of the brain? a mere dead skeleton

of opinions, a few dry bones tied up together without any flesh and sinews, if there be not a soul to add moisture and life, substance and reality, truth and joy! "There are truths," says the Count de Maistre, "which man can only attain by the spirit of his heart (*mente cordis*). A good man is frequently astonished to find persons of great ability resist proofs which appear clear to him. It is a pure mistake. Those persons are deficient in a sense; that is the true cause. When the cleverest man does not possess a sense of religion, we can not only not conquer him, but we have not even the means to make him understand us, which proves nothing but his misfortune." These are men made rather to wonder at the things they hear, than to work any: men who will rhyme upon the judgment which condemns them, and vent it for a mockery. "Essayists, with thoughts as distinct, and perchance as numerous, as their fingers, they will declaim against the silliness of chivalry; they will talk about ignorance, and darkness, and absurdity, and folly, and the like, such being, perhaps, the qualities they are most familiar with; and they will congratulate themselves on being born in an age when knight-errantry has been supplanted by author-vagrancy; when a youthful aspirant after renown, instead of breaking a lance in a tournament, wears a quill to the stump in a review."[1] Every writing and object seems to them of this colour; for, like Atheists, they infect innocent matter with their own venom.[2] They look with basilisk eyes upon everything—men, institutions, usages, wronging those who are as far from their report as they from honour: symbolically represented by Dædalus, or mechanical wisdom, a man ingenious but execrable, envious, a murderer, a contriver of mischief and destruction;

[1] Guesses at Truth. [2] Montaigne, II, 12.

fearfully answering to the last evil which Pythagoras said entered into a state, the first being luxury, the second satiety, the next insult, after which ruin followed.[1] "The art of printing," says Friedrich Schlegel, "in itself one of the most glorious and useful, has become prostituted to the speedy and universal circulation of poisonous tracts and libels; it has occasioned a dangerous influx of paltry and superficial compositions, alike hostile to soundness of judgment and purity of taste—a sea of frothy conceits and noisy dulness, upon which the spirit of the age is tossed hither and thither, not without great and frequent danger of entirely losing sight of the compass of meditation and the polar star of truth."[2] Hence the revival of a school of sophists, in which youth is taught, as by the master whom Aristophanes lashes:—

τὸ μὲν αἰσχρὸν ἅπαν καλὸν ἡγεῖσθαι,
τὸ καλὸν δ' αἰσχρόν.[3]

These disciples study, but do not meditate; for men study to become knowing, but they meditate to increase in goodness and virtue. A great German philosopher, at the end of the seventeenth century, who was as profoundly master of history as of science, made use of this remarkable expression—that the last sect in Christianity, in the whole historical development of the Christian revelation and of modern times till the end—that the last sect, and also the most general and the most fearful, would be Atheism. As Friedrich Schlegel observes, "This must have appeared a paradox when it was delivered: however," he adds, "as the beginning and the end often resemble each other, that which will be the last may have also been the first sect."[4]

[1] Stobæus, II, 120.
[2] Hist. of Lit. II, 39.
[3] Nubes, 1019.
[4] Philosophie des Lebens, p. 333.

"Insulated already by opinions, these men are separated from each other still more by interests. Covetousness is the soul. Who among them has a family, a country? Each has himself, and nothing more. Generous sentiments, honour, fidelity, devotion, all that used to make beat high the heart of our forefathers, seem to them like empty sounds. What the poor peasant learns at the foot of the altar—to support the human condition in peace, to love his brethren, to serve them, to devote himself for his country, to die for his God—men never learn either on the 'Change or in the theatre, or in the antechambers and saloons, where places are distributed. To calculate is the sole business of these men. Conscience is an astonishment and a scandal." This is the portrait which a great writer of France has drawn of his contemporaries. "What," he continues, "do you perceive on all sides but a profound indifference as to creeds and duties, with an ardour for pleasure and for gold, which can procure every thing? Every thing can be bought—conscience, honour, religion, opinions, dignities, power, consideration, respect itself; vast shipwreck of all truths and of all virtues! All philosophical theories, all the doctrines of impiety, have dissolved themselves and disappeared in the devouring system of indifference, the actual tomb of the understanding, into which it goes down alone, naked, equally stript of truth and error; an empty sepulchre, where one cannot even find bones." Friedrich Schlegel remarks, that "the high moral principles of life are variously attacked and overthrown by three destructive passions: in the first case, of spiritual blindness, the moral sense is perverted and falsified by pride and vanity; in the second case, of the soul becoming wild and disordered, it is by some one of the sensual passions that the moral sense is at first confused, then perverted, and finally extinguished;

in the third case, of a total torpidity of the inward life from selfishness and avarice, the moral sense is utterly lost—it becomes extinct, while the dead mammon, as the highest good and the only object of existence, enters, and is established in the place of all higher and spiritual good." [1]

While such reflections are forcibly presented to us on casting an eye upon the manners of the world around us, it cannot, indeed, be denied, that, as on all subjects which are not connected with the duties and spiritual destiny of man, great light has been thrown upon the various fields of science, and that in these, men have laboured with admirable perseverance and success. So far wisdom will admit the claim of our age to an increase of light; but still it will be only to conclude, in the words of the divine prophecy, which the Church reads in the office of Holy Saturday: "Juvenes viderunt lumen, et habitaverunt super terram: viam autem disciplinæ ignoraverunt, neque intellexerunt semitas ejus, neque susceperunt eam filii eorum. A facie ipsorum longe facta est. Non est audita in terra Chanaam, neque visa est in Theman. Filii quoque Agar, qui exquirunt prudentiam quæ de terra est, negotiatores terræ et fabulatores, et exquisitores prudentiæ et intelligentiæ: viam autem sapientiæ nescierunt, neque meminerunt semitarum ejus."

If from the sublime views of the dignity and powers of the human soul, which characterise the philosophy to which chivalry is essentially bound, we descend to survey this sad scene of intellectual ruin in minds which, with all their science and knowledge, are not more spiritualised, as Malebranche proves, than those of the vulgar crowd of worldly men, must we not feel horror at the view of "their monstrous baseness"? How far do the men of

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, p. 39.

religious and chivalrous spirit differ from these modern sophists? Aristotle once replied to a similar question, ὅσῳ οἱ ζῶντες τῶν τεθνηκότων. It is even so,—as much as the living from the dead. What is life to them? I say, what degree of happiness can they possess, whose spirits are thus enslaved by the senses, and separated from the Divinity, the centre of life and joy? What is the value of an existence thus perverted from all the ends of high and pure enjoyment, for which it was beneficently given?

> While I am compassed round
> With mirth, my soul lies hid in shades of grief,
> Whence, like the bird of night, with half-shut eyes,
> She peeps, and sickens at the sight of day.

"Longa dies igitur quid contulit?" "Fi de la vie," cried a princess of France, when she was pressed to take a remedy for her disorder, "fi de la vie! qu'on ne m'en parle plus."

Certainly, when a man of genius or religion is tempted to contemplate the common lot and condition of mankind,—when he looks down, like the philosopher in Plato, upon the toils and vanities, and delusions of a worldly life, ὡς ἐξ ἀπόπτου θεώμενος—beholding in the regions from which he has descended all that is admirable and lovely, the τὸ πολὺ πέλαγος τοῦ καλοῦ—his soul discerning τηλεσκόπῳ ὄμματι what is invisible to the vulgar, as the ancients would say, the chariot and horses and countenances of the gods,—his mind haunted with the idea of perfection, of "aliquid immensum infinitumque,"—his

> ——— body's self turned soul with the intense
> Feeling of that which is, and fancy of
> That which should be,—

language must be inadequate to express his convic-

tion, that men are formed for a nobler purpose and for a higher enjoyment;—that

> The finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,
> The electric blood with which their arteries run,

were not designed to assist them in the painful pursuit of miserable gain, or in the search of that mean excitement which a perverse and degraded nature is content to substitute for the higher feelings of which it was originally susceptible. "Oh! que j'aime l'inutile," will be his reply to the maxims of the worldly wise. Life is not worth acceptance, if we are to be solely occupied with its realities.

> Heaven-born, the soul a heaven-ward course must hold
> Beyond the visible world she soars to seek
> (For what delights the sense is false and weak)
> Ideal form, the universal mould.
> The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest
> In that which perishes, nor will he lend
> His heart to aught which doth on time depend.

Such perfect apprehensions of the vanity of mere earthly interests have, no doubt, been vouchsafed to men. St. Benedict being at his prayers in the night perceived a sudden brightness, and presently he saw the whole world deciphered, and set out before him by a ray of the sun, abbreviated and comprised in a little volume. "It is no wonder," saith St. Gregory, "that he who was compassed and environed about with a divine light, and elevated above the world and himself, should see an epitome and abridgment of the world before him: not that the earth and heavens were lessened and straitened to the measure and capacity of his eyes, but because, with a heavenly light, his soul was so dilated and enlarged, that being close united with God, with facility it beheld and saw all that was under God." The sum may be briefly stated. It is not for heroic or for saintly spirits to quit their

line of solemn procession to mix in the press and confusion of the multitude; to make their judgment wait upon the sentence of the unwise many, and to draw no advantage to their hearts from the possession of that noble treasure, the inheritance of ancestral virtue, of the uninterrupted chain of a long and brilliant history.

Perhaps these broken and imperfectly developed thoughts will be sufficient to indicate upon what peculiar grounds the chivalry of our age may be disposed to take refuge in the remembrance of past times; since, amidst the pursuits of real life, the fruit of its early studies must be lost in consequence of the general disorder of the intellectual world. It is sad and ominous to be presented with such images at the commencement of our course; but the evil was more of necessity than of choice, since we are on all sides oppressed with the opinions "non modo vulgi, verum etiam hominum leviter eruditorum."[1]

VIII. Thus it has been seen that heroic examples, and the images of poetry, viewed with a general disposition to esteem and respect the past, will belong to the varieties of the course on which we are entering. It will possess also other features, of which it may be well to form a general idea from the first. I am not ignorant that in consequence of the total change in religion and philosophy which distinguishes the age that established what has been called the Reformation, there was produced a most unfortunate rupture between men and their ancestors; that, not content with laying aside the contested points of faith or ecclesiastical government, they thought it necessary to forget the whole middle age, and to despise the history, the arts, and the poetry, with which its recollections were so in-

[1] Cicero de Oratore, III.

timately blended and united. Friedrich Schlegel justly remarks, "that such a breach and throwing aside of the intellectual inheritance of our forefathers could scarcely fail to be produced by a revolution so sudden and so entire": and, indeed, after such a loss of all that was vital, it mattered but little what men could forfeit in addition. Down to a time very near our own, and even generally at present, this old literature, as Dionysius Halicarnassus says of the ancient Attic eloquence in his age, is, as it were, bespattered with mud, and every insolent scribbler has his fling at it, προπηλακιζομένη καὶ δεινὰς ὕβρεις ὑπομένουσα. "Ceterum et mihi," that I may use the words of the great historian of Rome, "vetustas res scribenti, nescio quo pacto, antiquus fit animus; et quædam religio tenet, quæ illi prudentissimi viri publice suscipienda censuerint, ea pro dignis habere, quæ in meos annales referam."[1] In order to take any interest in what follows, we must be willing to agree with the poet, who says that we should

> —— to bokis that we finde,
> (Through which the olde thingis ben in minde)
> And to the doctrine of these old wise,
> Give credence in every skilful wise,
> That tellen of these old approved stories,
> Of holiness, of reignis, of victories,
> Of love, of hate, and other sondrie things,
> Of which I maie now makin rehersinges.[2]

A number of distinguished works, which appeared in Germany after the middle of the eighteenth century, succeeded at length in directing attention to the too much neglected history of that country, and to the many beautiful traits of magnanimity and virtue which are related in the ancient chroni-

[1] Livy, XLIII, 13.
[2] Chaucer's Legend of Good Women.

cles.[1] In availing myself of these and similar sources, it seemed to be that, independent of the matter of these books, their general tone, and air of antiquity, were entitled to some degree of admiration. Favorinus, indeed, advised the youth to adopt ancient manners, but the words that were in present use.[2] Nevertheless, the

> ——— speciosa vocabula rerum,
> Quæ priscis memorata Catonibus atque Cethegis,

possessed a high degree of interest; and as, when we walk in the sun, we are coloured by its golden rays, so, in reading these books, we cannot prevent our thoughts and language from assuming their colour.[3]

Dionysius Halicarnasseus remarks of Thucydides, that he seemed to admire whatever was more ancient,[4] and he even censures him for having often chosen antiquated words;[5] though the same charge may be advanced against Plato, whose unrivalled beauty of language might have deterred men from such criticism.[6] The Greek poets always chose the ancient names of their heroes: thus they called Amphiaraüs and Adrastus the Phoronides, and Theseus they called Erechthides.[7] It was the use of ancient genuine words that Cicero so much admired in Lælia. "Truly, when I hear Lælia, (for women more easily preserve incorrupt antiquity, because, being unacquainted with the conversation of many, they always hold the things which they have first learned,) I listen to her as if I were hearing Plautus or Nævius; the sound of her voice is so just and simple, not being infected with the least ostentation, or desire of imitation, that I feel con-

[1] F. Schlegel's Hist. of Lit. I, 3. [2] Aul. Gell. I, 10.
[3] Cicero de Oratore, II, 14. [4] Lysias.
[5] Epist. ad C. Pomp. [6] Dion. Halicarn. de Demosth.
[7] Pausanias, lib. VII, 17.

vinced it was thus her father used to speak,—thus her ancestors."[1] And, in another place, he recommends the occasional introduction of ancient and unused words, as imparting dignity and grandeur to a discourse,[2] for which usage the refined eloquence of Lælius was remarkable.[3] Without entering into the Platonic question, whether names are merely conventional, or have a real and essential connexion with the things denoted; without staying to determine whether the Homeric river should be designated by the name given to it by men, or by that under which it was known to the gods;[4] it may be allowable to hazard the opinion, that there is a language, as well as a philosophy, belonging to chivalry; for, as Cicero says, "si est honestas in rebus ipsis, existit ex rei natura quidam splendor in verbis."[5] And Siramnes did but express the mind of chivalry, when he said that words at least are in our power, even if we should be prevented from action; accounting for his own excellent sayings, and his unsuccessful deeds,[6] on the same principle as that urged by Demosthenes upon the Athenians, when reminding them of their ancestors, "If occasion be wanting, and we cannot act like them, let us at least think like them, and imitate their greatness of soul."[7] Cicero adduces the eloquence of Demosthenes in its peculiar grandeur of expression, as the consequence of his having studied Plato, of whose philosophy the Grecian orator spoke with such admiration in his Epistle to Heracleodorus. Indeed, upon reflection, it is obvious that there must be a language peculiar to a disposition of mind so defined as that of chivalry,

[1] De Oratore, III, 12.
[2] De Oratore, III, 38.
[3] Brutus, 21.
[4] Plato, Cratulus.
[5] De Oratore, III, 31.
[6] Plutarchi Apophthegm.
[7] Plutarch. de Fals. Legatione.

since it is the characteristic sign of all human knowledge and of all human sentiments, that they should be bound to language, which is itself a production of the soul, and in the formation of which the imagination and reason are both employed.

An old critic has remarked, that in Homer a grand and noble sound is given to the mean and vile names of many towns by means of conjunctions, as Σχοινόν τε Σκωλόν τε;[1] and he shews that Homer has given a grandeur even to the name of Nireus and his three ships, in saying that Nireus led three ships; Νιρεὺς Ἀγλαΐης υἱὸς, Νιρεὺς ὃς κάλλιστος ἀνήρ.[2] And we know that the same philosophy, which Cicero declares to be destructive of eloquence, was essentially opposed to the whole soul of chivalry. As for the pleasure which names themselves can afford, the admirable author of "Guesses at Truth" has said, that "one can hardly help wishing at times to be a Southern, for the sake of being called by a southern name. Listen," he adds, "to the names which meet you at every turn and winding in a Spanish chronicle: many of them come upon you with a sweeping sound, like a full peal of bells, while others have a depth and solemnity as if they were brooding over the glory they had inherited from Pelayo and the Campeador."

The action of all these principles may perhaps be traced in the composition of the following books, which may appear like a measure full of state and ancestry. Possibly, in some instances, it may even dictate the choice of authors, in order that the very names which are cited may have a certain venerable sound and authority, in harmony with the tone and object of the whole work; for even truisms and

[1] Demetrius Phalereus de Elocutione, 54. [2] Ib. 61.

common-place remarks may sometimes be presented under a certain noble form, when connected with works whose origin seems lost "in the dark backward and abysm of time," or conveyed in the language of men whose very names breathe holiness and majesty. Assuredly, if with the Platonic philosopher,[1] in beginning his research into the high and sacred mysteries of the divine nature, any one should ask where he ought to apply for beauty of language, a light of words, or a harmony of melodious sounds, worthy of such a flight, he ought to be directed to the writings of the holy doctors and monks of the earlier and middle ages of the Church. Occasionally, though but very seldom, the sentence of some writers of the modern philosophy may be introduced, because, in the instance of such men who wrote in the first age of its establishment, they were not wholly deprived of the light of the Catholic faith, which was then but passing away from this country and still discernible; and we find that frequently such men expressed the ancient principles, in the noble language with which the old religion furnished them, to the sublimity of which they had not then become insensible; and besides, with respect to others of subsequent time, whose genius has fostered some scattered rays of celestial brightness, every sentence which expresses truth belongs of right to the philosophy of the Catholic Church, and it is an innocent and even perhaps a very laudable exercise to direct these separated beams back to their common centre, where only they can discharge the salutary office for which they were created. Nay, who can tell but that the lost children, who have followed them through the interminable wastes of error and vanity, may be enabled to persevere in pursuing them, when they are con-

[1] Max. Tyr. XVII, 1.

strained to cease their anomalous wanderings, and to guide men infallibly to truth?

With respect to the style to be observed in these disputations, I shall not labour to imitate that of our modern Stoics, who, like their models of old, may be truly denominated "architects of words."[1] It is an excellent rule for this purpose which prescribes, that in general every word taken separately should be a common word in constant use with the people; so that even children, when they hear the whole read aloud, may suppose that they could write in the same style.[2] With respect to the introduction of learned tongues, which may seem to justify a charge of foreign insolence (a fault which Cicero ranks along with rustic asperity),[3] it may be sufficient to remark, that there are many sentences and expressions which do not retain the same beauty when the words are changed; and Greek shall only be used where the verse or phrase carries with it a greater grace and emphasis than the same would bear in Latin or English. After all that can be said against pedantry, the Greek language was familiar to the knightly heroes of the Crusades, and the noble princes of Latin dynasties in the East; and therefore its introduction here is the less open to a charge of inconsistency. On the tombs of the grand masters of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, which are still to be seen at Jerusalem, Ptolemais, Rhodes, and Malta, many inscriptions are in Greek, the being able to read and understand which would certainly never be unbecoming in a knight. Such are those on the tombs of Fernan de Heredia, Jacques de Milli, Giovan Battista Orsini, Pierre d'Aubusson, and Guy de Blanchefort.[4]

[1] Cicero, Brutus, XXXI.
[2] Cicero, Orator, XXIII.
[3] De Oratore, III.
[4] Monumens des Grands-Maitres de l'Ordre de Saint Jean de Jerusalem, par le Vicomte de Villeneuve-Bargemont, I.

However, every visitor here has permission to pass over such passages, if he find them troublesome. They shall not be multiplied where the occasion already explained does not exist. It shall be left to learned poets like Virgil to talk of mixing wine with Achelous;[1] and in no instance shall it be intimated that the ability to conjugate τύπτω is essential to chivalry. Where classical authorities are associated with passages from Christian writers of various ages, it will be obvious that they are not produced as historical evidence respecting a fact connected with any point of time, but only as moral evidence to enforce or exemplify some general truth, which may apply equally to all periods of the world.

IX. It may be proper to offer some general observations, in this place, touching the character of the works from which chiefly I have derived my materials. The declamations of the modern philosophic writers on history, as they have been called, were, in the first place, passed by with the contempt, and also with the horror, which even the world is beginning to evince for deceivers of this kind. But history in general, and that of the middle ages in particular, presented of course the most fruitful ground for the exercise of such labours. And here I must call my reader's attention to the benefit which may be derived from consulting those original historians, who present such lively portraits of ancient chivalry, and to whose candour and love of truth their infidel transcribers of these days are indebted for all the information which they so proudly present, as if it were to them that the world was indebted for the discovery. As for the general character of the times with which those histories are concerned, it would be premature to offer many reflections at present; yet some few remarks may

[1] Vid. Macrob. Saturnal. V, 18.

be advanced. It may be urged, in the first place, that nothing can be more unreasonable than to make the obscurity in which those ages are involved to serve as evidence that they were unhappy. We know but little of the twenty-three years' reign of Antoninus Pius. The Count of Stolberg produces this as an instance to shew that the happiest periods of history are not those of which we hear the most:[1] in the same manner as in the little world of man's soul, the most saintly spirits are often existing in those who have never distinguished themselves as authors, or left any memorial of themselves to be the theme of the world's talk; but who have led an interior angelic life, having borne their sweet blossoms unseen, like the young lily in a sequestered vale, on the banks of a limpid stream.

In a state of society also, where men were not obliged by law to observe the discipline of Christians, it is to be expected that violent contrasts would be presented, and that the number of the good, that is, of those who were good from principle, would appear comparatively small. Before all things were weakened, dissolved, and melted into one vast dull mass of mediocrity, in which there would be nothing to appear as a contrast to evil, it was unavoidable that excellence and constancy of virtue, and that the perfection of Christian sanctity, should produce a violent reaction, so as apparently to give rise to crimes of a certain ferocious and sublime character; for the same reason that there may be fewer avowed infidels and atheists, where the modern system has obtained undisputed possession of a country, than in any other. M. Rubichon has well explained this difficulty—"There is no reaction where there is no action; there is no infidelity where there is no faith; religion is not insulted where it is never

[1] Geschichte, VIII, 1.

mentioned. Is there not a God? 'I wish nothing better,' is the general reply under such circumstances. 'There is no reason to hate him. If there be a God, it is well; but as his kingdom is not of this world, and we are so beneath him, he can never be concerned about us, and consequently he does not require that we should be concerned about him.'"[1]

"The history of the world is the judgment of the world," says a celebrated poet; and I am far from wishing to express the opinion, that the middle ages should be exempted from this charge. There have been always passions and errors, and consequently crimes and troubles; but it seems to me that the Abbé de la Mennais is singularly happy in his distinction between the past and later ages, where he says, that in them "men knew what was evil and what was good; whereas, at present, men are rather inclined to doubt than to pronounce positively what is evil and what is good."

The disposition to revile the period of Christian antiquity accompanied the zeal of the religious and political innovators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; it became the spirit of those ages to revile the past; and this leads me to remark a circumstance which will further explain why historical truth, as far as regards Christian antiquity, is often obscured to the moderns. On the one side, those who are attached to the ancient wisdom find it impossible to enter into the detail of all the crimes and absurdities and sophisms of the men who calumniate it, whose whole course is so ignoble and wretched that they rather endeavour to forget it, and leave the judgment to God, who searcheth hearts; whereas the Church, which became intimately connected with all the institutions of the

[1] De l'Action du Clergé, p. 20, 200.

middle ages, is in itself so venerable and majestic, so closely associated, even in the estimation of its adversaries, with all that is noble, and generous, and heroic in our early history, that the grossest attacks directed against it are found to excite great interest in consequence of the magnificent back-ground which must belong of necessity even to such false and malicious representations; however false and malicious, they must still be concerned with names which, after all efforts to pervert their sound, inspire the ideas of sanctity and peace, so that even the faithful are drawn on by the magic of the harmonious words which their adversaries are obliged to repeat in calumniating them. That it should be the spirit of any age to calumniate a period from which it derives all its ancestral treasures, need excite no surprise. "All things are to be expected by man, since I am now accused by you." This was the observation of Xenophon when he found himself basely charged with treachery by the very men whom he had conducted from the plains of Babylon; whom he now beheld rising up, one after another, to give unjust sentence against him.[1] There is nothing strange, therefore, in the circumstance of ingratitude and calumny being visited upon an heroic age. Pericles, in his celebrated oration over the slain, laid bare one spring which would be sufficient to give movement to those base passions. "Men," he said, "are always ready to listen to the praise of others as long as each man supposes that he could perform what he hears; but whatever is recorded exceeding that point they regard as an object of envy, and reject as incredible."[2] It may be observed in all those modern writers, that they take a pleasure in dwelling upon the faults of the old Christians, and in exaggerating their crimes.

[1] Anab. VII, 6.

[2] Thucydid. II, 38.

This, too, arises from a principle of constant operation in all ages. It is remarked in Athenæus how later poets, even Æschylus and Sophocles, ascribed certain corrupt manners of their own time to the Homeric age, which did not belong to it.[1] And in the same manner it is certain that, even where there was a disposition to do justice to Christian antiquity, sufficient care has not been taken to form a just estimate of the intentions of a simple people. That a French liberal, like M. Montlosier, should produce the reproaches of Pope Gregory to the clergy, designed for their correction, and preserved by them to be studied by their successors, as an historical evidence of the corruption of the clergy in the middle ages, is no great wonder; but that a learned and candid German historian, like Neander, should make similar use of the remonstrances of St. Bernard to his clergy, intended for their private edification, and transmitted by them to our time, does indeed appear strange and grievous. Surely there is great reason to suspect histories, in the composition of which the ordinary rules of life and the dictates of common sense seem violated. Neander might have observed that St. Bernard was so far from standing alone in his age, that he represents himself as deriving his greatest consolation from the character of his contemporary clergy. Thus he says to the monks at Clairvaux: "Tristis est anima mea usquedum redeam, et non vult consolari usque ad vos. Quæ enim est mihi consolatio in tempore malo et in loco peregrinationis meæ? Nonne vos in Domino?"[2] The modern writers seem to consider the Christians of the middle ages as men who were deficient in natural reason; but they bring no proof that the superior men of those times (for the vulgar at all times want guidance) stood in need of the

[1] Lib. I, 14. [2] Epist. 144.

writers of the nineteenth century to tell them what their duty was. What these men thought to be their duty, in all probability was their duty; and no doubt, without waiting for our judgment, the people generally could determine when they had a good king and a holy bishop, and when there was that good cause which is required for martyrdom. The scenes and events which appear to our eyes as having been most extravagant may suggest very different reflections from what are now generally advanced. They seem in one respect to serve as an evidence of the truth of the Christian religion; for if, instead of the zeal and enthusiasm which characterized those times, so much nearer than our own to the great events of the Christian history, men had appeared as indifferent and cool as the present race of reasoning disciples, it would have been very natural to infer that they did not believe in it. The zeal and enthusiasm of those ages seem a necessary link in the chain of historical evidence in proof of Christianity. It was to be expected and required that human nature would thus act when in the presence of such a miraculous and divine event. It may be for men like the moderns, who lead a comfortable and easy life of indifference and oblivion, to rail at enthusiasm, but how can it be for them to talk of faith? Moreover, a conviction of the profound faith which prevailed in those ages may induce men of really philosophic minds to be more cautious in charging them with superstition. Friedrich Schlegel remarks that, "faith should not be considered, as many persons would teach, to be the true middle way between both extremes of superstition and infidelity; but on the contrary, that superstition should be ranked along with infidelity, for it is impossible to assign it a place separate from infidelity. Superstition is a positive error and part of unbelief, which last is generally rather a

misbelief, a false belief, than a bare absence of belief; it is an idolizing of nature and of reason, and of its suggestions and knowledge. One may even lay it down as a general position and invariable rule, that wherever faith in the one good and just God is lost, there will be raised inwardly some more or less dangerous idol, either of selfishness, or of sensuality, or else a system of reason and an idolatry of nature, or the false sentiment of power belonging to that pernicious spirit which despises and ridicules every thing but itself." [1] Generally, as applied to the charges usually brought against the different institutions of the middle ages, there seems excellent sense in the expression of Guizot, that "nothing falsifies history more than logic: when the mind rests on one idea, it draws all possible consequences, and makes it produce all that it could produce, and then represents it in history with all this attendance. But it is not so that the world moves; events are not so quick in their deductions as the human mind." [2] Of late years, however, several illustrious men have employed their genius in defence of the heroic ages of Christianity. Müller calls the middle ages "the ages of forgotten or unknown merit." "The substantial part of the knowledge and civilization of antiquity never was forgotten," says Friedrich Schlegel; "for very many of the best and noblest productions of modern genius we are entirely obliged to the inventive spirit of the middle ages. It is, upon the whole, extremely doubtful whether those periods which are the most rich in literature possess the greatest share either of moral excellence or of political happiness. We sacrifice truth to effect when we speak of the dark ages and of the revival of knowledge." [3] We are unjust in giving

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, p. 298.
[2] Cours d'Hist. Mod. V, 23.
[3] Hist. of Lit. I, 7.

with one consent exclusive praise to new-born gawds, though they are made and moulded of things past, giving to dust that is a little gilt

More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.

Who does not love and admire the patriotic warmth with which Voght speaks of the German people united under Maximilian? Certainly the spectacle of a vast empire, rich in that old national virtue which still gives an interest to their name, is most imposing. Then ruled Berthold the Dextrous, and Albert the Lover of the Arts, in Mainz; John the Learned, in Worms; Friederich the Wise, in Saxony; Philip the Generous, in the palatinate of the Rhine; George the Wealthy, in Bavaria; Philip the Magnanimous, in Hesse; Albert the Warlike, in Brandenburg; Eberhard the Bearded, in Würtemberg; and over them all the virtuous Maximilian, in imperial splendour, who himself, in "The White King," held out a pattern for all brave and magnanimous heroes.

X. Friedrich Schlegel, speaking of the decline which was manifest in the art of historical writing in England, observes that one great cause of this consists in the want of some stable and satisfactory philosophy. "Without some rational and due conceptions of the fate and destiny of man, it is impossible to form any just and consistent opinion, even concerning the progress of events, the development of times, and the fortunes of nations. In every situation history and philosophy should be as much as possible united."[1] It would not become chivalry any more than youth to boast of having a system of philosophy which would exempt it from all danger of going astray; and yet its apparently undefined wanderings, like the playful walks of childhood, will be found more true to the simple harmony of nature,

[1] Hist. of Lit. II, 225.

than the cunningly calculated progress of the worldly wise. Men take more pains to lose themselves than would be requisite to keep them in the right road. Guided by the infallible light of faith, firmly attached to the pillar and ground of truth, all faithful Catholic Christians maintain a great advantage in having the farthest end of knowledge always visible to them, and in possessing an internal conviction of what ought to be done: without an effort of their own they find themselves possessed of a comprehensive view of this wide and universal theatre, presenting so many more mysteries than the scene wherein they play, yet all subject to the influence of a perfectly consequent and systematic government; and it can only be through their own exceeding fault if they do not think and live conformably to a complete and rational adoption of a doctrine and object. Under such impressions, they trust themselves on the ocean of thought as on that of life, full of hope and means of security; and whichever way they are borne, they spread their sails; and though they may seem sometimes like children playing on the shore with shells and sand, or like young poets pacing through a grove, "chewing the food of sweet and bitter fancy," or only disposed to "fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world," there may be consistency in their lives, and harmonious unity in their imagination. The reader of these volumes must be prepared to engage upon a quest where perhaps the tracks are not exactly marked nor the passes made smooth: there may be no accurately expressed indications of the way; there may be chasms and interruptions; even when concerned with ideal images, it will not be *οὖλον ὄνειρον*, like that which the Homeric Jupiter sends to Agamemnon, a whole and connected dream, a complete and unbroken view: and yet in these symbolical forests of chivalry, as well as "amid the

wilds and wastes of human speculation, so many crosses have been set up by holy men, reminding the wayfarer at every turn of the things which ought evermore to be uppermost in his thoughts";[1] that it will be his own fault if he should complain of difficulty or give reason to report of danger. He must therefore be willing frequently to wander on with me without being confined by any strait rules or fixed direction. Nay, it must often appear as if

> Il ne se plaist qu'en chevaux
> Rodant par monts et par vaux;

like a knight of the Round Table, who rides through adventurous forests, and is ever ready to encounter whatever giant may come forward to oppose his advance. Perhaps in this forest before us there will be found many strange adventures, and furious men, and monstrous phantoms, rising up in countless diversity of form to combat those who are on the quest of honour. Yet there is a joy belonging to such an exercise which is well represented in the description of the young man when made a knight by King Alexander, in the romance of Perceforest, where it is said, "After this he galloped off through the forest so full of spirits, that he seemed as if he would joust against the first tree that he met: thus did he joyously ride through the forest till the hour of vespers." Nevertheless, I shall not esteem all who are not of our company as adversaries, justifying those revilers who accuse us of loving indiscriminate slaughter. Our duty is to spare friendships and dignities, to avoid giving irremediable wounds; it is rather to feign enemies, and them not always, nor all that can be supposed, nor in every manner. Bryan of the Ilys, sworn brother of Sir Meliot, "a passynge good knyght," shall be our guide in this; for "he was full loth to do wronge

[1] J. C. Hare.

and full loth to fyghte with any man but yf he were sore souzt on, so that for shame he might not leve it."[1] Or rather we shall follow the track of Sir Servause le Breuse, who had "never courage nor lust to doo batail ageynst no man but yf it were ageynst gyaunts and ageynst dragons and wylde beestes."[2] Assuredly no levelled malice infects one comma in the course I hold. Our way is over pleasant meadows and through the deep wood, under the shade of melancholy boughs, leading us perhaps where some willow grows askant the brook, that shews his hoar leaves in the glassy stream, that we may dive into the river's darksome deep, where, often floundering, we shall be well read in all its soundings; or where some little bark is moored, into which we may leap, and trust ourselves, without oar or compass, to the rapid waters. Nor let the grave and solemn scorn to join us company. According to the ancient fable, it was Pan's good fortune to find out Ceres as he was hunting and little thinking of it, which none of the other gods could do, though they did nothing else but seek her seriously; to shew, as Lord Bacon says, "that we expect not to receive things necessary for life and manners from philosophical abstractions, but from discreet observation and the universal knowledge of the things of the world, whereby oftentimes, even by chance, as it were going a hunting, such inventions are lighted upon":[3] and Sphinx, or science, was said to beset the highways, because, which way soever we turn in this progress and pilgrimage of human life, we meet with some matter or occasion for contemplation. Our present course will correspond with the variety of nature.

[1] Morte d'Arthur, I, 86. [2] Id. II, 383.
[3] On the Wisdom of the Ancients.

For we have fair resource in store
In classic and in Gothic lore;
Nor hill nor brook we pace along
But has its legend or its song.

To borrow a comparison from the poet, Victor Hugo,[1] I wish that this book may resemble one of those beautiful old cities of Spain, in which one finds everything; cool walks shaded by orange-trees along the banks of a river; great open squares, exposed to the burning sun, for festivities; narrow, winding, dark streets, composed of houses of every form, height, age, colour; labyrinths of buildings, all confused together, palaces, hospitals, convents, halls, all raised in an appropriate style of architecture; market-places, resounding to the busy hum of men; cemeteries, where the living are silent as the dead: in the centre, the vast Gothic cathedral, with its airy spires and massive tower, its fine sculptured portals, and its arches and capitals of varied tracery, its deep vaults, its forest of pillars, its burning chapels, its multitude of saints, its high altar lighted with a thousand tapers,—wonderful structure! imposing by its enormous magnitude, curious in its details, sublime when seen from a distance of two leagues, and beautiful when only two paces from the eye. Then, in another quarter of the city, the vast arch or aqueduct constructed by the Romans; or, concealed in a grove of palms and sycamores, the ruins of the oriental mosque, with its domes of brass and enamelled pavement.

When some will object to these books, that they are unequally sustained, and too obviously made up of fragments collected from various quarters, I will refer them to this image, and ask if it was not better to leave the palace of the middle ages standing untouched by the side of my own little humble structure

[1] Les Orientales, préface.

than to demolish these monuments of a grand age, in order to construct, with their materials, something uniform and mean, like a street in one of our modern English towns, which any vulgar builder may produce as all his own. Even Nature herself rejects such models of uniformity; for in her magnificent forests you find the majestic oak by the side of the humble brier or the green sapling. It is by no means necessary that we should be able always to determine the exact matter of fact which will give rise to this varied imagery. Cicero deemed him over cautious who should examine carefully whether it was really Marius's oak that was to be seen at Arpinum, and the actual palm of Ulysses which remained at Delos, for it was enough that both of these were sown in the minds of men: "nullius autem agricolæ cultu stirps tam diuturna, quam poetæ versu, seminari potest."[1] We can speak of nothing to some men but they will require us immediately to point it out with our finger. "You must not oblige me," says Plato, "to shew that the things which I produce in discourse are actually and in every respect matters of fact."[2] Let no one proceed here who belongs to that class of men who think that there is nothing true ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ σωματοειδὲς, except what they can touch, and see, and drink, and eat. Moreover, I do not engage to pursue any unbroken track, which would enable indolent persons to trace my progress without trouble, and to ascertain exactly the distance between each of my places of repose. One who describes chivalry may in his literary wanderings resemble Sir Beaumayns, of whom some persons said, "'We pray you tell us where we may find hym.' 'Fayre lordes,' said Syr Ironside, 'I can not telle you, for it is full hard to fynde hym; for

[1] De Legibus, lib. I, 1. [2] De Repub. V, 473.

suche young knyghts as he is one, when they be in their adventures ben never abydyng in no place.' "[1] Here will be game for all, and scenes most congenial to first-fledged youth. Here they will have the advantage which Plato prescribed for them—the means of beholding danger without incurring risk till they are strong enough to meet it.[2] And here age may remember the adventures of its past career, and fight over again the battles of youth, to derive the sweet fruits of past experience, and even to increase its store of wisdom—

ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡβᾷ τοῖς γέρουσιν εὖ μαθεῖν.[3]

Under the green-wood tree
Who loves to lie with me,

may never cease worshipping the Graces, joined with the Muses, the sweetest union. May we never live separated from the Muses, but may we always consort with crowns!

οὐ παύσομαι τὰς Χάριτας
Μούσαις συγκαταμιγνύς,
ἡδίσταν συζυγίαν.
μὴ ζῴην μετ' ἀμουσίας,
αἰεὶ δ' ἐν στεφάνοισιν εἴην.[4]

Our course shall be like that of Sir Bors, Sir Ector, and Sir Lyonel, who ride in search of their friends from country to country, in woods, and wildernesses, and wastes, sleeping at the foot of crosses, and having perhaps visions of angels and of holy penitents, who come before them during the night to worship. All varieties of scene, and form, and sound, will belong to this adventure. We shall listen at one time to the

[1] Morte d'Arthur, I, 224.
[2] De Repub. V, 467.
[3] Æschylus, Agamem. 570.
[4] Eurip. Hercul. furens, 673.

> Wild strains of scalds, that in the sea-worn caves
> Rehearsed their war-spells to the winds and waves;[1]

and at another to the stringed lute of old romance,

> That cheer'd the trellis'd arbour's privacy,
> And soothed war-wearied knights in rafter'd hall:[2]

nor shall we be unfamiliar with towered cities, famed more for noble ways of life than for palaces and walls—

> Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
> In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold.

Thee too, O rare land of courtesy! we shall behold,

> O Florence! with the Tuscan fields and hills,
> And famous Arno, fed with all their rills;
> Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy!
> Rich, ornate, populous, all treasure's thine;
> The golden corn, the olive, and the vine,
> Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old,
> And forests, where beside his leafy hold
> The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
> And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn;
> Palladian palace, with its storied halls;
> Thine all delights, and every muse is thine;
> And more than all, the embrace and intertwine
> Of all with all, in gay and twinkling dance,
> 'Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance![3]

It must be observed, however, from the beginning, that an exact knowledge of particular events is not to be sought for in such a course as the present. Persons who, like Hurd, merely desire to learn "all that is necessary to be known about chivalry," will meet with nothing here save disappointment; but those who are themselves endowed with the spirit of chivalry, may be assured of finding scenes that will be congenial to the sentiments of their soul, and to the images which they discern within.

[1] Coleridge. [2] Wordsworth. [3] Coleridge.

XI. It may be necessary to state for what description of persons the course on which we are entering has been principally designed. The Latin line will partly answer this end. Juvat

Ingenuis oculisque legi, manibusque teneri.

A pleasure which, even in our age, may be obtained by every one who undertakes to unbar the portals of the heroic world. "Car je voys planté de jouvenceaulx de gentil sang et qui s'adonnoient de leurs natures a la chevalerie."

All the ancient philosophers, and, in later times, all who have thoughts consistent with the principles of chivalry, have, as Cicero says, approached the cradle, not only because they could more easily discover in youth what was the will of nature,[1] but also because they were fully impressed with the importance of the early images which become familiar to us in the morn and liquid dew of youth. Moreover, as a certain taste is required to judge of a picture or a statue, or as no one can determine a wise man who is not himself wise;[2] so it is only the young, or, at least, those who have retained a youthful mind, who can enjoy or even comprehend chivalry. In youth, as in chivalry, there is a vital principle, "from every-day forms educing the unknown and the uncommon. In that little Goshen there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality";[3] and while chivalry and youth are left, imagination and piety can never spread their holy wings totally to fly from us. We have all heard "that the time of issuing out of youth and entering into the world is the most dangerous of all our life";[4] and that the chief care of young men, who enter the world,

[1] Cicero de Finibus, lib. V, 20. [2] Plin. Epist. X.
[3] Elia. [4] Gobinet's Instruction of Youth, 177.

ought to be the preservation of the sentiments and practices of piety, which they have observed in their youth; because the first source of the disorder of young persons, at that time, springs from the change of their sentiments concerning piety, and the abandoning of their former religious exercises; such as daily prayer, reading pious books, frequenting the holy sacraments, conversation with pious persons, and advising with a discreet director."[1] Now, before we take a step in this projected course of inquiry, I would have it well understood, that it can only be innocent (for that is the highest praise it can ever hope to merit) when exercised in connexion with this piety of early youth, and in the spirit of the most simple and humble dependence upon these great sources of life and blessedness. Where these are lost, all exercise of the imagination must be vain and pernicious.

In these wanderings we shall, no doubt, meet with much of worldly matter, and, perhaps, occasionally be called to listen to sentences which the saints condemn; but they are not presented to inspire us with affection for worldly matter, or to dispose us to admit sentences which the saints condemn. It is only intended to exemplify, as it were, and to embody forth the higher and more spiritual lessons, which have been prepared for Catholic youth by holy men, to provide innocent images for the delight of their imagination, that, as in their recollection of St. Ludovico di Gonzaga, who is represented in his early years wearing a little cuirass, the object of their admiration may be beautiful as a Paladin and perfect as a saint. However, it is not to be denied, that those persons are most happy who have the least occasion for these earthly forms, which, if deprived for an instant of their symbolical

[1] Gobinet's Instruction of Youth, 178.

character, must be acknowledged to be identical with vanity itself. Nevertheless, I see that this, my first ingression, will not be led from the disputation of critics upon the romances and literature of the middle ages; but, as Cicero says of his own work upon eloquence, it will be maintained from the midst of philosophy, which, as it is ancient and profound, will give rise to some degree of objection, or, at least, of wonder; for either men will wonder what connexion these things have with those on which we profess to treat, though in the end they will see with what justice we have mounted so high for the source of chivalry; or they will object that we should follow uncommon and irregular paths, leaving those which are worn; although I may repeat Cicero's words, and say, "ego autem et me sæpe nova videri dicere intelligo, cum pervetera dicam, sed inaudita plerisque." But if that great orator proclaimed of himself,[1] that he was indebted for whatever degree of eloquence he possessed, not to the workshops of the rhetoricians, but to the retreats of the Academy, and, as it were, to those shaded walks on which he could trace the footsteps of Plato, with how much more justice may it be affirmed of all who would follow the high qualities of the knightly soul to their source, that they have never found them to flow, in genuine perfection, from any other spring than that which yields the water of life, of all intellectual, of all spiritual purity. The literature connected with chivalry can never be secularized, as other branches of study have been of late, in accordance with the prescription of the modern sophists. Assuredly, the only wisdom which is consistent with the views that will be here unfolded, is that which holds it for an infallible maxim, that there is nothing more certain than the

[1] Orator, 3.

Christian Catholic faith; nothing so worthy of affection and reverence as the Christian Catholic Church; so sublime in her mysteries, so pure and holy in her maxims, supported by so great authorities, foretold by the prophets, confirmed by so many miracles, cemented by the blood of martyrs, defended by so many learned and sainted persons, embraced by such a multitude of people, continued during so many ages, notwithstanding the persecution of pagans, the false doctrine of heretics, and the wicked lives of many of her own children. The writers who neglect this ground in endeavouring to correct men are, as Friedrich Schlegel says of the modern writers of England, only physicians who make use of palliatives, but who are incapable or unambitious of effecting a radical cure.

In one book, indeed, we shall find those who address themselves more particularly to persons who have been born and trained up in the modern philosophy. Some old knight or venerable priest will conduct them to an eminence, and entreat them to look back and behold their fathers, and mark well how unjustly they have been induced to scorn them. Here the language, though designed to awaken the English nobility from a state, as Shakespeare would say, of "bestial oblivion," in which the wrongs of the innocent are forgotten, shall be, notwithstanding, that of reconciliation and peace. As Priam says to Helen, when he leads her upon the walls, he will say, "My dear child, come hither, that you may behold your former friends and relations. Be comforted: I do not blame you; it is not your fault that you are opposed to them now in hostile ranks":

> οὔτι μοι αἰτίη ἐσσὶ, θεοί νύ μοι αἴτιοί εἰσιν,
> οἵ μοι ἐφώρμησαν πόλεμον πολύδακρυν Ἀχαιῶν.[1]

[1] Il. III, 164.

But charge your memory with these oracular words of a great saint, and meditate upon them till you can complete the sentence to which they belong. Say to yourself, "quid prodest— ? quid nocet— ?"

I am aware with what distrust this part will be regarded by the few who may turn to it; for if ever the moderns are tempted to look into a book which defends the religion of their ancestors, they approach it, as Catulus says of some Roman who began to apply his mind to the Greek philosophy, "timide, tanquam ad aliquem libidinis scopulum :"[1] they put armour on their ears and on their eyes, whose proof, nor deeds of noblest chivalry, nor solemn sayings of the ancient wise, nor sight of priests in holy vestments bleeding, shall pierce a jot.

The history of our own country furnishes us with a parallel instance to what is related of a Roman emperor, who nearly succeeded in banishing from every library the writings and images of Virgil and Livy, as of men who had no genius or learning, only distinguished by inflation of style, and neglect of truth.[2] At the same time, it is probable, that a day will arrive when this prejudice must give way. "Homines transeunt, sed veritas Domini manet in æternum." I have always, says Cicero, considered it to be the part of an irrational animal, not of a man, not to lend an ear to the Greeks, who professed to undertake such great things, and who engaged to furnish men with means of beholding things obscure, and of living virtuously; and if one did not dare to hear them openly, lest authority should be diminished with one's fellow-citizens, it seemed at least but right "subauscultando excipere voces eorum, et procul, quid narrarent, attendere."[3] I am aware, too, that the confusion and disorder of

[1] Cicero de Oratore II, 37. [2] Sueton. in Vit. Calig.
[3] De Oratore, II, 36.

the matter may, perhaps, be even traced in the form and composition of the book which treats upon it; and this, no doubt, will be an important circumstance; for it was with order, *μετὰ τῆς κοσμιότητος*, that Bellerophon fought against the Chimæra, when he prevailed so as to destroy the whole tribe of wild savage monsters;[1] and, as Plato says of the sophists, it is hard to lay hold of this race of men, who will be here opposed to me, *ὅτι δυσθήρευτον εἴη τὸ γένος*.[2] Here will be, indeed, a fearful obstacle! How I have thought of this and of these times, I shall recount hereafter. In the mean time, I may cherish the hope, that some men, who make grave and large invectives against absurdities, will, if their hearts be made of penetrable stuff, if custom have not brazed them so that they be proof and bulwark against sense, be convinced here, either that they have been offended by something which is only strange to them, from being different to what they have been accustomed to, and which is not contrary to wisdom (and the wise Plutarch observes of men generally, that they are more quick to resist what is against custom than what is against nature[3]); or else, that the real absurdities which offend them do in no ways concern the faithful, to whom belongs that negative theology of which St. Denis is the great master, and which is explained so well by Luis of Granada, as consisting in the doctrine which is inseparable from all their affirmative ideas of what relates to God; for instance, that all their conceptions being limited, God is not great, or wise, or powerful, in the manner or degree which any created spirits can understand; and that it is necessary, at one time, to deny the perfections which, at another time, are ascribed to him, in order

[1] Stobæi Florileg. I, 155. [2] Sophista, 61.
[3] De Esu Carnium.

to glorify him more.[1] Therefore, as St. Augustin says, these conceited objectors will find, that, after all their pretensions to exclusive wisdom, they have been speaking only against old wives' tales and childish opinions, in confutation of which, the more earnest they have been, the more they shewed themselves to want judgment. Here it will be seen, that whosoever was moved by such clamour to turn unto them, condemned not the doctrines of the Church, but shewed himself ignorant thereof: St. Augustin adds, "If you retain anything of a human heart, if you have any care of yourselves, seek diligently in what good and pious sense these things may be spoken. For such a faith as believeth of God absurd and inconvenient things, we do more vehemently and plentifully accuse than you; and when by any of our church these things are understood as the letter soundeth (such as that God can be angry, and the like), their ignorance we instruct, their pertinacity we deride."[2] Facts of history, the incidental and undesigned evidence of the romantic literature of the middle ages, the sayings of holy men, who lived during the times that are calumniated, may fill some hearts with gladness that are now empty of all things but grief; may sound like tidings of peace to some whose souls are full of discord and dismay; may supply a fresh instance to prove, that in the mysterious government of the world of spirits, the great God makes use of humble instruments; that of a few hours spent in reading, of the very act of closing a book, when alarmed by reflections on the responsibility of knowledge, the consequence, as an old writer says of his six weeks' acquaintance with one who was before and since that time unknown to him,

[1] Catechism of Luis of Granada, part I, c. 38.
[2] Lib. de Mor. Eccles. Cathol. c. 10.

may end only with their being, that is, may be eternal. Oh, rejoice beyond a common joy, and set it down in your heart, as it were, with gold, on lasting pillars, if you should be induced, by any imaginations here suggested, to enter into the ark of the Catholic Church, singing, with St. Augustin, "non docet Catholica quod putabamus, et vani accusabamus."[1]

The other books are addressed to persons who are previously prepared for such a course, and with whom it may be permitted us to wander on, forgetful of the discords and the wounds of life; for if we were still to remain, as it were, in presence of these objectors, there would be no end of objection, of accusation, and of sorrow: there is a mode of reviving objections a thousand times refuted, which no patience is adequate to surmount; there are men whose very remembrance is like a killing frost to the beautiful blossoms of a poetic world:

> Not them, therefore, in sweet society,
> The generous youth conversing ever name.

Yet here, too, our course, though amidst a garden of pleasure, may not be without a high moral end. Religion does not permit her children to gather the flowers which spring up in every part of the intellectual world without a view to promote their wisdom and goodness. "One may affirm anteriorly to any verification in detail, that there cannot occur in any writer whatsoever a single beauty, little or great, of which the original may not be shewn in a Catholic truth."[2]

In the idlest page of chivalrous history we shall meet with something

> ——— that toucheth gentillesse
> And eke moralite and holinesse;

[1] Confess. VI.

[2] Mémorial Catholique.

something that will bring it home to our inmost souls, that even the most severe and solemn precepts of our holy faith are productive of human happiness, consistent with all that is beyond question lovely and of good report, agreeable to the constitution, and even essential to the perfection of our nature. Our glorious ancestors, the champions of Christendom, and the very pillars of noble chivalry, did lay the foundations and enjoy the fruits of the freedom and the fame of England; as Homer would say,

τόνδε νόον καὶ θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἔχοντες.[1]

And a nation can never be prepared to perish as long as any portion of her youth possess souls of the same proof and constancy.

XII. It is to be expected that some persons will ask upon what grounds the use of chivalrous romances can be reconciled with the introduction of history, philosophy, and religion, or, in other words, of reality and truth: and though the answering this inquiry fully might lead to an entire dissertation, which, however interesting, would lead us too far beyond our prescribed limits, I cannot proceed without producing some apology. I pass over the mere literary objections of men like Landino, the commentator on Dante, who speaks of the "fabulous and inelegant books of the Round Table." For it is sufficient to know, that the exclusive taste of these scholars for the writers of Greece and Rome, upon the revival of classical learning, had rendered them insensible to the beauty of the romantic literature. Nor need I seek to defend the chivalrous romances with the poems of Dante against the sweeping and immoral censures of Cornelius Agrippa, whose professed object is, to level all

[1] Il. IV, 309.

intellectual greatness. In the same manner it was natural that a French writer of the age of Louis XIV should speak like Fleury of "the impertinent and monstrous fables of the Troubadours;" [1] and that an affected epicurean—I mean, one who rather affected than really felt the influence of that philosophy—should say, like Montaigne, "Car des Lancelots du Lac, Amadis, Huons de Bordeaux, et tels fatras de livres à quoy l'enfance s'amuse, je n'en cognoissois pas seulement le nom, ny ne fais encore le corps." [2] Equally idle would it be to seek to alter the judgment of critics, who condemn the romances of chivalry in a manner that would lead us to suppose they had never read them with any attention, like the learned author of the History of Fiction, who says, "As we advance in the history of Arthur of Little Britain, we do not find Arthur possessed of a single quality, except strength and courage, to excite respect or interest." [3] The passages that will hereafter be produced, though without any reference to such charges, will furnish the best answer to this kind of criticism. But the opposition which I shall notice proceeds from a quarter demanding far greater attention and respect than are due to any mere literary judgment, however sound and impartial. We all have repeatedly heard that such reading has been condemned by holy persons as being at least injurious, if not absolutely opposed to the interests of the spiritual life; a lesson awfully exemplified in the most sublime passage of the greatest Christian poet, where he sings of Francesca and the son of Rimini's proud lord, whose tale of surpassing woe, beginning with that day "when for delight they read of Lancelot,"

[1] Discours sur l'Hist. Ecclés. IXme. [2] Essais, I, 25.
[3] Dunlop, Hist. of Fiction, vol. I, p. 348.

caused such bitter cries of sorrow that, heart-struck, he

> Through compassion fainting, seem'd not far
> From death, and like a corse fell to the ground.[1]

St. Teresa became fond of reading these romances after her mother's death; and though she confesses that while reading them she did not discover their evil, and though the conversation of her cousin-german seems to have been a greater cause of distraction than her studies; yet she relates that her father disliked them, and would have prevented her from reading them; and she agrees to his opinion in stating them to have been a great snare. It is true, at the time when passing the most severe censures upon these objects of her early admiration, she confesses, that while enchanted with them, her intentions were not evil, and that she would not for the world have given offence to God; an admission which might be urged in behalf of these books which then delighted her. Yet it is not becoming to criticise the language of the saints, when the results of their science are plainly laid down. Alban Butler takes occasion[2] to pass a severe censure upon such books, as tending to pervert the heart and to excite the passions; though it is probable that he judged of their general character, without attending to exceptions, and rather from the report and experience of others than from his own judgment. Yet still, it would argue but little piety or submission to maintain a contrary opinion.

Father Possevin, a learned Jesuit at the close of the sixteenth century, who was the director of St. Francis de Sales at Padua, used to complain, that for the last five hundred years the princes of Europe had been infatuated by romances, and that

[1] Canto V. [2] Lives of the Saints, vol. X, p. 310.

in his time it was a mark of inelegance not to be familiarly acquainted with Lancelot du Lac, Perceforest, Tristan, Giron le Courtois, Amadis de Gaule, and Primaleon. Far be it from any faithful Christian to recommend the reading of books which have been condemned by holy men. It is not from a conceit of the world having grown wiser, or of there being any new mode of piety more agreeable than what was known to the saints of past times, that, in the ensuing books, passages will be occasionally produced from the romances of chivalry.

We know, as Dom Bartholomew de Martyribus says, "verba Dei et sanctorum promulgata non sunt, ut varientur cum tempore, sed ut illibata permaneant in omni tempore et eis serviant omnia tempora."[1] But it is one thing to condemn the general and promiscuous use of a study, and another to maintain that it is not capable of yielding advantage to any person, or under any circumstances. Poison itself is a remedy in some diseases; and there is nothing so evil but what may be converted to purposes of good. Father Luis of Granada, accounting for the pleasure which men take in the romances and exercises of chivalry, upon the principle that a display of courage and the contempt of death causes the greatest admiration, continues to shew, that the same principle which gives rise to those fabulous histories, to those tournaments and blazon of shields, should induce men to study the acts and triumphs of the holy martyrs, whose courage and contempt of death were beyond comparison more admirable and more heroic than any ever evinced by the chivalry of the world.[2] Moreover, it would be a mistake to suppose that the censures and complaints of holy writers, with respect to the reading of the chivalrous romances, are to be understood as

[1] Stim. Past. XXVI. [2] Catechism, part II, c. 17.

conveying an universal prohibition from examining or citing them. It is certain, on the contrary, that they would gladly have seen them enlisted on the side of piety; yielding beautiful images to the fancy of youth, and illustrious examples of ancient honour to chivalry; proving that there is no region so abandoned to weeds but that some sweet flowers can be gathered, and that where minds predisposed to evil find food for their base passions, plain and holy innocence is only conversant with purity and brightness itself; in like manner as we read, that from one and the same river the Egyptians drew blood, and the Israelites a lively and crystalline stream.

It is certain that some very wise and devout men have been in the habit of reading these romances with pleasure. René d'Anjou heard his good chaplain, Pierre de Marini, preach against Lancelot and Amadis, and the romances which he dearly loved; and while he respected Marini the more for his evangelical boldness, the old saint-like king, feeling assured that they did his mind no injury, continued to read them, and even composed new volumes in imitation of the old.[1]

Even the worthy curate of Cervantes could urge a great deal in favour of such writings, saying, "with some regulations, they might be made both instructive and diverting." He speaks of Tirante as furnishing a treasure of delight; for in the Spanish, as in the Italian translation by Lelio Manfredi, it is at least free from the objectionable garb in which it has been arrayed by the Count de Caylus, after the fashion of the Count de Tressan. "And this Palm of England," says the curate, meaning the Palmerin of England; "let it be kept and preserved as a thing unique, and let another casket be made

[1] Villeneuve, Hist. de René d'Anjou, 91.

for it, such as that which Alexander found among the spoils of Darius, and set apart, that the works of the poet Homer might be kept in it. This book, sir comrade, is of authority for two reasons—the on, beecause it is a right good one in itself; and the other, because the report is that a wise king of Portugal composed it. All the adventures at the castle of Miraguarda are excellent, and managed with great skill. The discourses are courtly and clear."

Cervantes probably conveys his own opinion, when the knight says to the canon, "read these books, which you may find will banish all melancholy if you are troubled with it, and sweeten your disposition if it be harsh. This I can say for myself, that since my being a knight-errant, I am brave, courteous, bountiful, well bred, generous, civil, bold, affable, patient." The libraries of the monasteries contained romances. Perceval was in that of Lincoln Cathedral. Many northern romances were preserved in the Abbey of St. Denis. Bevis of Southampton, in French, was in the library of the Abbey of Leicester. In that of the Abbey of Glastonbury were the Liber de Excidio Trojæ, Gesta Ricardi Regis, and Gesta Alexandri Regis. In a catalogue of the library of the Abbey of Peterborough, in 1247, are recited Amys and Amelion, Sir Tristan, Guy de Bourgogne, and Gesta Osuelis, all in French, together with Merlin's prophecies, Turpin's Charlemagne, and the Destruction of Troy. Among the books given to Winchester College by the founder, William of Wykeham, in 1387, was Chronicon Trojæ; and in the library of Windsor College the flagitious commissioners of Henry VIII. found there were "duo libri Gallici de Romances, de quibus unus liber de Rosa, et alius difficilis materiæ." They were then in a hurry.

The second division of the Book of Heroes begins

saying, "In the Abbey of Tagmunden, in Franconia, an ancient volume was discovered. There it was held in high honour, and was sent to the Bishop of Eichstædt, who was greatly delighted with the adventures related in it. Ten years after his death it fell into the hands of his chaplain; and when he began to tire of reading it, he presented it to the Abbey of St. Walpurgis, in the town of Eichstædt. The abbess, a lady of uncommon beauty, was highly amused by it, as well as her nuns. She caused two clerks to copy it in the German tongue, for the good of the whole Christian world."

In the statutes of New College at Oxford, given about 1380, the wise founder says, "Quando ob Dei reverentiam aut suæ matris, vel alterius sancti cujuscunque, tempore yemali, ignis in aula sociis ministratur; tunc scolaribus et sociis post tempus prandii aut cene liceat gracia recreationis, in aula, in cantilenis, et aliis solaciis honestis, moram facere condecentem, et poemata, regnorum chronicas, et mundi hujus mirabilia, ac cetera que statum clericalem condecorant, seriosius pertractare."

A monk of St. Denis wrote a history of chivalry, which is still an authority. Jean de Billy, a Carthusian monk, translated the ancient Christian romance of Josaphat and Barlaam, and published his work at Paris in 1574. The Count of Stolberg gives substantial reasons for rejecting the report of Nicephorus, who says that Heliodorus was deposed by a council for having composed the romance of Theagenes and Chariklea,[1] a book which was the admiration of Tasso, and deemed worthy of being illustrated by Raffaello and Giulio Romano. However, it is to be observed, that many and grievous faults must be charged upon the Greek romances of Jamblichus, Achilles Tatius, Longus, and Eusta-

[1] Geschichte, X, 227.

thius, from which the romances of chivalry are free. It is certainly to be remembered, to the praise of these latter compositions, that they have been the delight of admirable and heroic men. Philip Augustus, whom some historians regard as the greatest French monarch after Charlemagne, was the declared patron of the chivalrous romances in verse and prose: it was his favourite relaxation to hear them read aloud; and they are said to have arrived at their greatest perfection in his reign. The court of all the Valois had no higher amusement than reading the romances of chivalry. It was Charlemagne who ordered that those ancient heroic poems should be collected, which have been condensed into the Nibelungen-lied and the Helden-buch. That the great chancellor Séguier did not despise these romances, may be inferred from the copy of Gyron le Courtoys, which belonged to him, in the different borders of which he ordered the coats of arms of his nearest relations to be painted. Here we see emblazoned his own arms, those of his wife, of his eldest daughter, who was married to the Marquis de Coislin, and of his second daughter, who married the Duke of Sully.[1] In the revenue-roll of the twenty-first of King Henry III. of England, which is dated 1237, there is an entry of the expense of silver clasps and studs for the king's great book of romances. Arthur of Little Britain and some others are said to have been composed for the use of that poor young king, Charles VI., who, before his calamity, was remarkable for such a generous and romantic spirit. The greater part of these histories were composed in the twelfth century, which even Sismondi pronounces to have been a great age. Some are as old as the tenth

[1] Catalogue des Livres sur vélin de la Bib. du Roi, tom. IV, p. 255.

century.[1] It is not to the discredit of these romances, that in Spain some of the Arabian princes, such as the Almoravides, had expressly forbidden the reading of them, though their publication was encouraged by others of a more chivalrous spirit, like Abdulmumin.[2] Certainly it would be great injustice and inconsistency to deny that there is excellent matter in these books, which were the delight of our ancestors, and to maintain that they are utterly obsolete and useless; which, perhaps, will never at any time be true, until virtue, and honour, and faith, become obsolete and useless; until love, courtesy, humanity, friendship, generosity, and heroism, are no longer to be cherished and reverenced by mankind. When that time shall have arrived, and these volumes shall be consigned to forgetfulness, then may be repeated the words ascribed to Cato upon the death of Pompey; it may then be said, that of a truth already all sense of the ancient honour had in reality expired, but now that the romances of chivalry are to be given up, it will perish even in fiction: "Nunc et ficta perit."[3] It is impossible not to feel grateful for the gratification which is still to be derived from the labour of these ancient compilers, whose works, with all their imperfections, when discreetly read, may be able to exalt the imagination and to correct the heart; which could yield inspiration to the greatest of our poets; for

> The mightiest chiefs of British song
> Scorn'd not such legends to prolong;
> They gleam through Spenser's elfic dream,
> And mix in Milton's heavenly theme.
> And Dryden, in immortal strain,
> Had raised the table round again.

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[1] Hist. Lit. de la France, tom. IV, 207.
[2] Conde, Hist. de la Dominat. des Arabes, II, 417.
[3] Lucan.

Works in which the student, who has fathomed the depths of Platonic lore, will behold in action the sublime principles of his philosophy; books in which all the beautiful circumstances of real life belonging to a Catholic age are related with historical fidelity; which present a world of enchantment in harmony with the visions of youth, unfolding scenes which are ever sweet, and blooming with perpetual spring, until those withering hours, when the spirit is oppressed by the weight of the external world—

> When the huge book of faery-land lies closed,
> And those strong brazen clasps will yield no more.

Percy informed Boswell, that Johnson when a boy was immoderately fond of the romances of chivalry, and that he retained his fondness for them through life; so that, spending part of a summer at his house in the country, he chose for his regular reading the old Spanish romance of Felixmarte of Hyrcania, in folio, which he read quite through.[1] "The moral Gower," amidst his graver studies, was a great reader of these old romances. Even in the Schoolmaster of Ascham it is said that "la Morte d'Arthur did not the tenth part so much harm as one of the modern novels." It is to their honour that they should have been despised by men who could say with Montaigne, that they preferred the Decameron or Rabelais to all the romances of chivalry.[2] According to the polished taste of Politian, these romances of chivalry were worthy of being imitated: they were objects of study, and encouragement to the learning and munificence of Lorenzo de Medicis. They furnished themes which Tasso and Ariosto sang, and even

[1] Boswell's Life of Johnson, I, 25.

[2] Essais, II, 10.

What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse.

M. le Laboureur says, that a man of learning ought to feel shame if he should have gained nothing by reading the romances of chivalry. There would be no end of citing learned men who have acknowledged their obligations to them, like Pasquier, Fauchet, Dom Vaissette, Duchesne, Ducange, &c. These profound scholars supposed them, as Niebuhr regards Virgil, to contain an immense mine of learning. Victor Hugo says, that the Spanish romance of the Wrath of Mudarra is a Gothic Iliad. The very simplicity which belonged to the authors of these books, as when they call Joseph of Arimathea "the gentle knight who took down our Lord from the cross,"[1] gives them in one respect a character of perfect historical truth; for it shews that they were incapable of representing to men ideal personages: the heroes of their romances are but the exact resemblance of the real heroes of their time; and, therefore, it has been shewn by learned men, in the Memoirs of the French Academy of Inscriptions, that they may be used in common with history, and as of equal authority, whenever an inquiry take place respecting the spirit and manners of the ages in which they were composed. Such are the books of Merlin, le Roman du Saint Greal, le Roman du Vaillant Perceval, Lancelot du Lac, Meliadus of Leonnoys, Tristan, Ysaie le Triste, le Roman du Roy Artus, Gyron le Courtois, Perceforest, Arthur of Little Britain, the Morte d'Arthur, Cleriadus, all romances of the Round Table; also the Chronicle of Turpin, Huon de Bordeaux, Guerin de Monglave, Galien Restauré, Milles et Amys, Jourdain de Blaves,

[1] Morte d'Arthur.

Ogier le Danois, all concerning Charlemagne;—also Amadis de Gaul, Tirante the White, Partenopex de Blois, Gerard de Roussillon, Lisuarte of Greece, Palmerin de Oliva, Primaleon, Palmerin of England, Livre de Jason, La Vie de Hercule, Alexandre, &c. &c.

Gerard de Roussillon lived in the castle on Mount Lassois, near Dijon, which is now in ruins. There he retired from court in the reign of Louis le Débonnaire and Charles the Bald: it was his life in old rhymes, dedicated to Jeanne de Bourgogne, queen of France, which formed the text of the romance writers. History and romance are often found so intimately united, that it is impossible to separate one from the other. Romance says that in the eighth century died the Count and Countess Theodoric and Beatrix of Cleves, leaving one beautiful daughter, Beatrix, who inherited their possessions. In deep affliction for the loss of her parents, she mourned her solitude; and one day, being lost in reflection, as she sat at the window of her tower gazing upon the still silver flood of the Rhine, she saw below in the distance a little golden ship drawn by swans, and glittering in the evening sun. She watched its approach, and when it drew near the castle, she perceived rising out of it a fair and comely youth, who looked more like a Grecian god than a son of German chivalry. In one hand he held a silver shield with eight golden sceptres, and on his finger was a ring, and at his side hung a silver hunting horn. The lad left his boat and mounted to the castle, where he was entertained with all hospitality. After the banquet, being asked as to his name and country, and whether he was of noble or lower origin, he replied, that a fairy had given him the little gold ship and charged him, with strong words, that if he would be happy, he must not tell from what stem or place he came.

"So here," he continued, "I come under a strange name, to offer my services to you, O Princess of the Rhine, to fight for you with sword and lance, and to be your page in bower and hall." His offers being accepted, he was charged to revenge the orphan Beatrice on Wittikind, the Saxon, who slew her father; and in consequence he departed to the wars, and under Charlemagne fought bravely and killed Wittikind, and was rewarded by the hand of Beatrice. It was not till after three fine sons were born to them, (Dietrich, who held his father's sword, Gottfrid, to whom fell his father's scorn for wealth, and Konrad, who succeeded to lands and gold,) that Beatrice, instigated by fatal curiosity, drew the secret from her dear husband, and then the angry fairy came in the little ship with the swans, and carried him off, while poor Beatrice in vain looked out continually from the tower, hoping that he might come again in the little gold ship; but, alas! he returned no more.[1] Real history has repeated reference to this fanciful legend, which is associated with some of the most heroic names of our history. We are reminded of it at the great banquet of the Duke of Burgundy, at Lille, in 1454, when Adolf of Cleves appeared under the name of the Knight of the Swan; and the Castle of the Schwanenburg at Cleves still remains with a golden swan shining upon its towers, and with its record that Elias de Grail, a chivalrous youth, of unknown parentage, married the heiress of Cleves.

Again, another instance of this alliance of history and romance. Romance says that Melusine used

[1] See the beautiful engraving in the Rheinische Bilder. The swan drawing the little ship with the armed youth occurs also in the Histoire Miraculeuse du Chevalier au Cygne, fils du puissant Roy Oriant, duquel est issu Godeffroi de Bouillon, avec les Faits de ce Roi et de plusieurs autres Princes et Barons Chretiens.

to become a serpent every Saturday night. Jean de Bouchet does not believe this report, although at the great banquet at Lille, by Philip, duc de Bourgogne, on one table was represented the castle of Lusignan with its ditches and many towers, on the highest of which Melusine appeared in the form of a serpent. History says that Melusine, sister of William the Fifth, duke of Aquitaine, who died a hermit, having inherited Melles and Lusignan, acquired that name. Her husband was Count Raymondin, and they lived in the castle of Lusignan. The lady was most beautiful, and a prodigy of learning; hence a report became prevalent that she was a necromancer. Others suppose that the count purposely encouraged the report of the serpent-form to keep off suitors. From her are descended the noble houses of Soubise, and Rohan, and Rochefoucault. Twelve battles of King Arthur are in authentic history. We have detailed accounts of his victories at Llongborth, which is supposed to be Portsmouth, at the ford of Morlas, and again at Badon. The illustrious Bishop Milner and Dr. Lingard both reject the account of Arthur being the founder of the Round Table. Yet that round table which so delighted the Emperor Charles V. when he came to Winchester, which was then new painted, and made to appear as it does at this day, which so well represented chivalry, that Cromwell's soldiers found themselves impelled to fire at it, though not the identical one which Arthur had erected, has at least the age of seven centuries and a half, for it was made by order of King Stephen, who built the Castle of Winchester. All historians hold that Arthur gained twelve victories, and that he was solemnly crowned at Pentecost with much splendour, at Cærgwent in Monmouthshire; that he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, returned home, and was wounded in battle, and retired

secretly to prepare for death among the solitaries of Glastonbury, where he died in so much obscurity, that his credulous countrymen would not admit the fact of his being dead, but continued to cherish that insane expectation, which, under the expression of *esperance de Bretagne*, has become proverbial for a groundless hope. Many passages and characters of history seem to have been borrowed from romance; such as, the deliverance of France by the Maid of Orleans.[1] Many places even bear a kind of legendary testimony to the events of romance, and derive an interest from such associations.[2] Many historical characters have resembled Sir Giles d'Argentine, whom Lord Hailes called "a hero of romance in real life." In ancient times also, the poetical and the real hero were often beheld in union. The Spartan Brasidas was a noble knight of true history, and Plato makes Alcibiades affirm that he had indeed his equal, but only in the Achilles of Homer.[3] Our annals contain many similar examples. What an instance presents itself in Edward the Black Prince, who avowedly studied the heroic page of romance to find patterns for chivalry!

When Peter the Cruel, upon flying to Angoulême, had prevailed upon the Prince of Wales to defend his cause, having presented him with a superb golden table, the prince ordered that the present should be shewn to his princess, who was at the same time informed of his resolution. This wise and excellent woman lamented in bitter terms the decision of the prince, and exclaimed aloud that

[1] Even Gaillard, in his work Sur la Rivalité de la France et de l'Angleterre, acknowledges that he thinks the history of the Maid of Orleans to be miraculous.

[2] Roland and 20,000 brave men who fell at Roncevaux were thought to be buried at Arles, in the cemetery of Eliscamps.

[3] Conviv.

she heartily wished that the table had never been presented, and that the wicked Peter had never set foot in their court. When her expressions were related to the prince: "I see well," said he, "that she wishes I should be always by her side, and never leave her chamber; but a prince must be ready to win worship, and expose himself to all kinds of danger, comme firent autrefois Roland, Olivier, Ogier, les quatre fils Aimon, Charlemagne, le Grand Leon de Bourges, Jean de Tournant, Lancelot, Tristan, Alexandre, Artus et Godefroy, dont tous les romans racontent le courage, la valeur et l'intrepidite toute martiale et toute heroique; et par Saint Georges, je rendray Espagne au droit heritier."

The editor of the last edition of the Morte d'Arthur says, that "this book was the favourite study of Nuño Alvarez Pereira, who, endeavouring as far as possible to imitate the character which he admired, became himself the fair ideal of a perfect knight, as courteous as he was brave, as humane as he was courteous, as pious as he was humane; uniting in himself the accomplishments of a hero, the feeling of a true patriot, and the virtues of a Christian and a saint."

Francisco Rodriguez Lobo says of him, in a passage of the Corte na Aldea, quoted in the preface to this edition, "there was a brave captain in Portugal, better than whom Rome never produced, who, by imitating a knight of romance, and copying the virtues which were written of him, became the greatest of his time."

This is sufficient to shew upon what grounds the romances of chivalry may be adduced as an historical evidence, entitled to perfect credit with respect to the spirit and manners of the age in which they were written. In point of language too, it may be inferred, perhaps, from the passages which I shall

adduce, that great profit and gratification may be derived from reading the Morte d'Arthur in the old English translation by Sir Thomas Malory, or the romance of Huon de Bordeaux, translated by Lord Berners. A great critical writer says, that the excellence of the French language is chiefly seen in the books compiled on the gests of the Trojans and Romans, and the delightful adventures of King Arthur, with many other histories and works of instruction; and in these old versions, in our language, there is a store of genuine idiomatic English, which will be enjoyed by every one who has grown weary of the affected philosophical jargon of some Scotch writers and their imitators. As a mere recreation, even the worthy curate of Cervantes deemed them licensed, "for the same reason that tennis, billiards, chess, and other amusements are tolerated, that men may find a pastime for those hours they cannot find employment for." It is still true, as Jean de Bouchet says, that in them "on veoit des choses incroyables et toutesfois delectables a lire."[1] If incredible and monstrous, did not the classic ancients also sing of dragons?[2] and where do we find in our romantic literature so many shameful and horrible deeds as in the one history of the Greek Agamemnon, whose heroic house is defiled with the most disgusting succession of crimes, perfidy, and bloodshed, the murder of father, wives, and sisters! On the other hand, what scenes of exquisite beauty, and what noble images of heroic virtue, abound in the romances of chivalry! Episodes at least, deserving the highest praise, might be selected from them, as in the collection of the *Cento Novelle antiche*, which was composed from them in the thirteenth century. It is well remarked, in Athenæus, that Ægistheus could not

[1] Annales d'Aquitaine, 152. [2] Vide Nicandri Theriaca, 438.

seduce Clytemnestra till he had murdered the old bard, whom Agamemnon had left to sing to her; and it is impossible to overlook the advantage which virtue can derive from the imagination being kept familiar with beautiful and illustrious objects, such as are presented by our heroic minstrels, who, like the Greek Phemius, knew many *βροτῶν θελκτήρια*,

ἔργ' ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε, τά τε κλείουσιν ἀοιδοί.[1]

It was under the influence of these romances that our ancestors kept alive the spark of noble and adventurous chivalry—

> As often as they heard bards tell
> How, in the old time, towers and cities fell,
> How haughty kingdoms met their destined day,
> And peerless champions bled their souls away.[2]

"The whiche excellent mater," said a worthy ancient of such works, "as longe as I lyve by the helpe of God, I shall contynue; for the more I followe and labour it, the more it pleaseth me; as the noble knyght or squyer lovynge the feates of armes, do perceyver in the same and be therby experte and made parfyte, so in laborynge of this noble mater I delyte and take pleasure." Seeing also that it is a study which forsaketh subtile and knotty inquisitions, (for we need not concern ourselves with either the Gothic or Arabian systems, as accounting for chivalrous romance; and if we can but inhale the fragrance of that rose, gathered in a delicious but almost inaccessible garden, of which the poet, in the fourteenth century, wrote that famous romaunt, it shall be left to theologians, civilians, chemists, and others to penetrate into the mysteries of its hidden nature,) a study which is

[1] Od. I, 338.

[2] Old German poem.

calculated not to wither, but to open the heart, filling the mind with wonder and admiration, with splendid and illustrious objects; we may conclude and appeal to the authority of Bacon, that "it tendeth to cherish nature, to secure health of body, and a long and happy life." True it is, if men would comprehend and enjoy these parts, they must learn, if they be old, as Cicero says, "repuerascere," and if young, to exercise the feelings of youth, not to anticipate the prudence, and distrust, and sagacity of the old: "odi puerulum præcoci sapientia." It is a wise precept, "miscere stultitiam consiliis," which must be put in practice here. We must lay aside all that harsh, and acrimonious, and proud wisdom, which constitutes the worldly wise; we must have some enthusiasm and much simplicity, more imagination and innocence than discernment and experience of mankind, putting on "bowels of mercies, kindness, and humbleness of mind," having hearts susceptible, in the highest degree, of generous and tender feelings, of admiration, and love, and pity; we must be content to humble ourselves, and even to become as little children.

> For folk of other mould, right well I wot,
> 'Tis all time lost; they comprehend me not.

True, as far as the majority of readers are concerned, "the fashion for the chivalrous romances may have passed away"; but as a modern writer has well observed, "there may be still some minds which possess that certain aptitude which is necessary for the full enjoyment of them. When that aptitude exists," he adds, "perhaps no works of imagination produce so much delight. It is something like that pleasure of which the poet and the painter partake from forest scenery, and in following the course of a mountain stream."

XIII. The propriety of classical allusions in a

review of chivalry may, perhaps, at first, appear questionable to some persons, although probably a moment's reflection will induce every one to admit it. I shall presently have occasion to state the main grounds upon which this propriety depends, and to observe the general principles which are to be taken into account in all inquiries respecting the nature and extent of chivalry. In the present instance it will be sufficient to shew, that this mode of extending the limits of chivalry is no modern invention, and that such a view of its extent may be justified by examples from classical learning. In the first place, this usage is according to the universal practice of the chivalrous writers in the middle ages. The author of the ancient chronicle of Godeffroy de Bouillon, in his prologue, quotes Job as saying, "que la vie de l'homme sur la terre est toute chevalerie."[1] Of the nine worthies, three of whom were Hebrews, Joshua, David, and Judas Maccabeus, and three Christians, King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bouillon, three also were Gentiles, Hector of Troy, Alisaundre of Macedon, and Julius Cæsar.[2] In the Morte d'Arthur it is said, that "Merlyn made the round table in tokenyng of roundenes of the world; for al the world, Crysten and Hethen, repayren unto the round table; they thynke them more blessid and more in worship than yf they had geten half the world."[3] Chaucer speaks of Hercules,

> That was of strength alone peerless.
> For like as bookes of him list expresse,
> He set pillers through his hie prowesse
> Away at Gades, for to signifie,
> That no man might him passe in chivalrie.[4]

[1] Les Faitz et Gestes du preux Godeffroy de Bouillon et de ses chevaleureux Freres: aussi plusieurs Cronicques et Hystoires tant du Roy Sainct Loys que de plusieurs autres Chevaliers: Paris.
[2] Les neuf Preux: Paris, 1507.
[3] Lib. II, 233.
[4] The Black Knight.

Again he says,

> Witness of Rome, that founder was truly
> Of all knighthood and deeds marvelous,
> Record take of Titus Livius.[1]

In the same spirit the poet Lydgate following Boccacio in his Hesiod, supposes that Theseus founded the order of knighthood at Athens. Fürterer, a Bavarian poet of the fifteenth century, treats in his romance of Arthur's Knights upon the origin of knighthood, which he dates from the times of the Argonautic expedition and the Trojan war. Sir Thomas More said in parliament, that Phormio made a solemn declaration concerning chivalry before Hannibal, and he calls the Carthaginian general "the prince and flower of chivalry." The tactics of Vegetius appeared under the title of "Livre des Fais d'Armes et de Chevallerie par Christine de Pisan." In the book entitled "Le Triumphe des neuf Preux," printed at Abbeville in 1487, the virtues and vices of "le vaillant preux roy Alexandre" are described with great justice, but in the language of our own chivalry. Hector is called "le puissant et preux Hector, miroir de toute chevalerie et preud-hommie." And Julius Cæsar being described as about to pass the Rubicon, is made to address these words to Rome: "J'ay esté ton champion; seuffre moy estre ton chevalier loyal, et seuffre corriger ceulx qui empeschent me donner ce que tu m'as promis."[2] With all the main facts as to the classical histories, men in our heroic age had a very general acquaintance; all knights had at least heard often

> Of Julius Cæsar the emperour,
> Of Alexander the conquerour,
> Of Greece and Troy the strong stryf,
> Where many a man lost his lyf.

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[1] Flower and Leaf.

[2] Les neuf Preux.

Warton quotes Chaucer to prove the general popularity of Alexander's history in the middle ages:

> Alexaundres storie is so commune,
> That every wight that hath discrecioune
> Hath herde somewhat or al of his fortune.

It was the common expression when it was said, "nothing so horrible had happened since the destruction of great Troy." Men were not struck with any air of inconsistency when they were presented with images taken promiscuously from the earlier or later chivalry of the world. In the Orlando Furioso there is this union of Gothic and classical images, which has so much provoked the criticism of modern pedants. Few of the chivalrous romances are without it; and Bojardo formed his chivalrous heroes partly and avowedly on the Homeric model. So far it only appears that the chivalrous writers, during the middle ages, assumed that those gentle knights, Sir Hector, Ajax, and Alexander, were gentle and chivalrous like themselves. I proceed to shew that this character, to a certain degree, and with due allowances for the circumstances of the world in their time, did actually, in many instances, distinguish them. That the old world must have had its chivalry in some form or other will appear manifest, when we come to examine into the nature of chivalry, and the principles upon which its existence depends. In this place it will be sufficient to point out the resemblance and identity. In the first place, it is evident to every intelligent scholar, that, in fact, the characteristics which belong to what has been termed the romantic literature are by no means inconsistent with the ancient and the true antique. The legends of Troy and the poems of Homer, the labours of Hercules, the war of giants and heroes, the beleaguering of Thebes by the seven champions, the expedition of Jason and the

Argonauts, the old heroic songs of the Romans, the birth and fate of Romulus, the combat of the Horatii and Curiatii, the pride of Tarquin, the death of Lucretia, the wonderful war of Porsenna, the steadfastness of Scævola, the revolt of Coriolanus, are all throughout romantic and chivalrous. As Friedrich Schlegel observes, "Even in the ancient tragedians, the echoes of this feeling are here and there to be distinguished. The romantic is not opposed to the antique, but to those false and frigid erudite among ourselves, who strive to imitate the form, without being gifted with any portion of the enthusiasm of the antique."[1] The whole fourth book of Diodorus concerning Hercules, the Argonauts, Theseus, and other heroes, is like a romance of chivalry. Athenæus describes a Round Table among the Gauls.[2] An early instance of chivalrous vows is recorded by Herodotus, where he relates how the Argives and Spartans contended for Thyrea.[3] Even things most unconnected with our own chivalry, though accidentally, for a time, associated with it, such, for instance, as the ordeal, occurs in the Greek poets. Every nation had its Hercules. Varro reckons forty. This might lead us to trace those great heroic fables of antiquity to some common source in the circumstances of human life, and in the very constitution of our nature. Indeed, the whole of our mental refinement is in so great a degree derived from that of the ancients, or, rather, so little has ever been created by any age, that it would be extremely difficult to treat, in any way, of a subject so intimately connected with literature as chivalry, without bestowing a few observations on the writers of Greece and Rome; "nations," says Friedrich Schlegel, "to whom we are indebted for so large a share of our mental cultivation, and from whom we

[1] Hist. of Literature. [2] Lib. IV. [3] Lib. I, 82.

have derived so rich a legacy of models."[1] "Quam multas nobis imagines, non solum ad intuendum, verum etiam ad imitandum fortissimorum virorum, expressas, scriptores et Græci et Latini reliquerunt!"[2] It would be well to observe the testimony which Cicero bears to Sulpicius; presenting so remarkable a contrast in its expression to the language of the moderns, who think themselves dispensed, through the fancy of possessing certain inventive faculties, from either respecting the examples or the traditions of past ages. "I remember," he says, "that from your early youth you were most studious and desirous of learning, omniaque, quæ a sapientissimis ad bene vivendum tradita essent, summo studio curaque didicisse."[3] It seems to be no homage to the Christian religion to deny the praise which is really due to the ancients, or to reject the wisdom of those primeval traditions, which through every age and nation have descended, though, indeed, under various degrees of corruption, from the original common fountain of all human knowledge; for what was conservative in the laws and creeds of the ancients was not of their invention. "The higher one remounts to antiquity," says a great French writer, "the purer are these creeds; they appertain evidently to primitive tradition, the common inheritance of the human race, altered and debased gradually by passions and reason, and declining with the progress of time, and in proportion as the schools of the sophists extended their influence." Nor can it be said with justice, that because the ancients were involved in the darkness of idolatry, therefore all traces of the Divinity which belong to the human soul were obliterated, or that their belief in a divine power, and their desire to propitiate him, were no

[1] Hist. of Literature, I, 20. [2] Cicero pro Archia Poeta.
[3] Epist. I, lib. IV.

more entitled to praise than the worst actions of their most profane men; for even Prideaux shews the error of such a judgment, when he attributes the fate of Crassus and Pompey to their profanation of holy things. On the contrary, examples which exhibit any degree of intellectual or moral greatness, as well as the sentiments which directed them, should always be respected, and may well be permitted to have a place in the archives of memory; so that, like the fate of the ancient music, of which the most simple and noble species were at once adopted into the service of the Christian Church, to whose liberal and comprehensive spirit we are indebted for the means of hearing many ancient Roman airs adapted to the service of hymns, and invested with a more solemn and ethereal harmony by the majestic accompaniments of the organ; the examples of heroic virtue which animated the ancients, and the great universal traditionary precepts of wisdom which they have left to us in their writings, being thus associated with all the intellectual treasures which are employed to illustrate and confirm truth, may assume new grandeur from its influence, and a character which will render them not unworthy of the bright banners under which they are made to serve.

Every one who is conversant with the histories and poetry of the ancients must have been struck with many instances which presented a strong resemblance to the spirit and character of our later chivalry.

Xenophon's account of Agesilaus, making allowance for the errors of his faith, reminds one of a perfect knight, remarkable for piety, valour, temperance, justice, and purity. The character of the old Persians is in like manner highly chivalrous. The same spirit is to be traced in that sentence which the Germans delivered in the Roman theatre,

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when they said, "nullos mortalium armis aut fide ante Germanos esse."[1] The sentiments of the Homeric age, as also those which prevailed in all the heroic periods of Grecian and Roman history, were in like manner more chivalrous than politic or sophistical. The oath which used to be taken by the Athenian youths might have been proposed to the chivalry of a Christian land—"I will not disgrace the sacred arms entrusted to me by my country, nor will I desert my place, *ἀμυνῶ δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἱερῶν, καὶ ὑπὲρ ὁσίων, καὶ μόνος καὶ μετὰ πολλῶν.*"[2]

The same spirit of devotion directed the whole view of the ancients as to the qualities of the heroic character. In any of the poetical records, wherein the heroes are mentioned, we find not that any one of them besides Diomedes did ever with his sword offer violence to any of the deities, and Diomedes suffered the most dreadful punishment afterwards, being put to death by his host.[3] It would be premature at present to dwell much in detail upon the heroic character of the ancients; but a few instances may be adduced to shew the resemblance which it bore to that of our later chivalry. Take the example of the Theban knight, described by king Eteocles in Æschylus—

μαλ' εὐγενῆ τε, καὶ τὸν αἰσχύνης θρόνον
τιμῶντα, καὶ στυγοῦνθ' ὑπέρφρονας λόγους·
αἰσχρῶν γὰρ ἀργὸς, μὴ κακὸς δ' εἶναι φιλεῖ.[4]

In like manner, it is impossible to read the speech of Sthenelaidas the Spartan, in Thucydides,[5] or of Agamemnon, in the Iphigenia in Aulis of Euripides, without observing that they breathe the very spirit of chivalry.[6] A few passages from the

[1] Tacitus, An. XIII, 54.
[2] Stobæi Florileg. vol. II, 110.
[3] Lord Bacon on the Wisdom of the Ancients.
[4] Sept. cont. Theb. 405.
[5] Lib. I, 86.
[6] Eurip. Iphig. in Aulid. 463.

Greek tragedy of Rhesus will make the justice of this view sufficiently manifest. In the first place, the doctrine of nobility is well marked in the testimony of Hector to the parentage and virtues of Dolon, who volunteers in a most perilous service for his country—

> ——— πατρὸς δὲ καὶ πρὶν εὐκλεᾶ δόμον
> νῦν δὶς τόσως ἔθηκας εὐκλεέστερον.

There is a display of noble spirit when Dolon scorns the offer of riches and title and splendid alliance as the reward for his service, but demands for his prize τοὺς ἵππους Ἀχιλλέως· having previously had the promise of Hector that his petition should be granted. This gives rise to another display of chivalry; for the possession of those horses was the grand object of Hector's ambition, as he informs him in reply,

> καὶ μὴν ἐρῶντί γ' ἀντερᾷς ἵππων ἐμοί·

he concludes, however, with these noble words—

> ἀλλ' οὔ σ' ἐπάρας ψεύσομαι· δώσω δέ σοι
> κάλλιστον οἴκοις κτῆμ' Ἀχιλλέως ὄχον.

Perfectly chivalrous are the generosity and frankness displayed by Hector, when having reason to suspect and condemn the conduct of Rhesus, in coming to the army when the danger seemed to be over, he does not conceal his feelings, and so permit displeasure against his old friend and ally to rankle in his breast, but immediately upon their first meeting thus accosts him:

> παῖ τῆς μελῳδοῦ μητέρος, Μουσῶν μιᾶς,
> Θρῃκός τε ποταμοῦ Στρυμόνος, φιλῶ λέγειν
> τἀληθὲς ἀεί, κοὐ διπλοῦς πέφυκ' ἀνήρ.
> πάλαι, πάλαι χρῆν τῇδε συγκάμνειν χθονὶ
> ἐλθόντα ———
> ταῦθ', ὡς ἂν εἰδῇς Ἕκτορ' ὄντ' ἐλεύθερον,
> καὶ μέμφομαί σοι καὶ λέγω κατ' ὄμμα σόν.

There is another chivalrous sentiment nobly pronounced by Rhesus—

> *οὐδεὶς ἀνὴρ εὔψυχος ἀξιοῖ λάθρᾳ*
> *κτεῖναι τὸν ἐχθρὸν, ἀλλ' ἰὼν κατὰ στόμα.*

And lastly, when Hector is accused of treachery by a stranger, like a knight of king Arthur he appeals with noble simplicity and confidence to those who had known his former life, and could bear testimony to his reproachless fame.

This must serve to justify our brave ancestors for having spoken with such confidence of the ancient heroes, as being noble and chivalrous like themselves. If any should please to make such sentiments a ground of accusation against them, as well as against the spirit of these books—for there are profane men who compare the heathen superstition with Christian simplicity—I must refer to another place the task of engaging with such adversaries. In the mean time, it will be sufficient to observe, that it is very possible to have the mind of a heathen without being in the least acquainted with heathen literature; and, on the other hand, that one may employ the language of the heathens, as far as quoting from their writings, without having one's faith in the least infected with their philosophy. A Christian may cite heathen testimonies, and may admire what was good in the old heroic world, without being the less a Christian; and it is too clearly seen in a great part of modern literature, and especially in the eminent productions of the age of Queen Anne, that a writer, having the mind of a heathen, may quote Scripture, and may even condescend to pass an eulogium upon such men as Fénelon, without having his mind restored by the light and influence of Christianity. While we affirm that there was, to a certain extent, a spirit of chivalry among the ancients, we do not

prove ourselves insensible to the mighty change which Christianity produced in every region of the moral world, when, according to the involuntary testimony of Niebuhr, "the old religion of Rome, and along with it all hereditary usages, were abolished, and a new religion was preaching other virtues and another kind of happiness exclusively, and was condemning sins unreproved by the old morality; when Rome, for ever disarmed, was become the capital of a spiritual empire."[1] On the contrary, we engage to shew that chivalry was not exempted from the blessed influence of this great renovation, for that, from this period, it assumes a character infinitely superior to all that had ever before entered into the conception of man; that it is invested with somewhat of a holy grandeur, arising from its Christian graces, for a single example of which, or of anything in the least approaching to them, we should in vain search the whole of heathen records, from the description of the wanderers of the desert, by Herodotus, to that of the most accomplished heroes of Greece and Rome, by Thucydides and Livy. In fact, it could not have been otherwise; for wherever the spirit of Catholic Christianity enters there must be a mind as much above that of the wisest and best of the heathens as heaven is above the earth.

Laurentie complains of the direction of early studies, which in modern times have been exclusively devoted to the literary associations of Greece and Rome;[2] a most just complaint, which speaks the sentiment of common sense and piety. In the monastic schools of the middle ages, as in those of chivalry, youths were not brought up as if they were to be Greek and Roman patriots and pagan

[1] Hist. of Rome, vol. I, p. 189.
[2] De l'Etude et de l'Enseignement des Lettres.

moralists; while they were induced to respect the virtues of the heathens, they felt assured of possessing a far higher standard, and of being bound to the discharge of very different duties; thus their sentiments, their deeds, their very language were to be chivalrous, but also essentially Christian, otherwise they would have been deficient in chivalry, which must ever be directed by the highest known good. They were not so blinded by immoderate admiration for classical learning, as to look with reverence to the Areopagus or the Forum, to extol their deeds of atrocious wickedness and democratic tyranny.

> Quid memorem infandas cædes? quid facta tyranni
> Effera?———

Not even the Homeric records could meet their lofty conceptions of reproachless chivalry. On the contrary, they would say even with Cicero, "Quid Achille Homerico fœdius, quid Agamemnone in jurgio?"[1] In vain to them would you hold up the palms of Greece and Rome. They would reply in the words of St. Augustin, "Quid mihi obtenditur nomen laudis nomenque victoriæ? Remotis obstaculis, insanæ opinionis facinora nuda cernantur, nuda pensentur, nuda judicentur."[2] It was to their own annals that they looked back with intense and affectionate interest, for examples of men, who, as the poet says, "were prodigal of their great souls in the service of their country." "It shews but little reflection," says Wippo, "to write and read the deeds of Tarquinius the Proud, of Tullus, and Father Æneas, and others, and never once to think of our Charles and three Othos, of our Conrads and Henrys, of our Fredericks and

[1] Tuscul. Disput. IV.
[2] De Civitate Dei, lib. III, 14.

Rudolphs." "Where," says Vogt, "do we find in the middle history of the Rhine so many shameful and horrible deeds as in one heroic house of Greece?"[1] Germany may well be proud of her Othos, Henrys, Lothars, Conrads, Fredericks, Karls, Rudolphs, Maximilians, Ludwigs; Bohemia of her Ottocars, Boleslaus, Wenceslaus; Hungary of her Stephan, her Ludwig I, Mathias Corvinus; Poland of her Casimirs, Boleslaus, Vladislaus I., Stephan Bathori, and Sobieski. It is our heroic defenders of the Church of Christ which should be dear to the youth of England; it is from the men whose learning and patriotism were guided by eternal truth that we should derive our models of chivalry, to animate our souls with the hope of future renown, or to console them with the remembrance of past greatness.

XIV. We are now prepared to meet the great question, and to determine what that general spirit of chivalry is, which can be found existing, more or less, under such different circumstances as those which belong to the early and latter ages of the world. "The age of chivalry is gone!" cried Burke, in a burst of impassioned eloquence, full of indignation and horror, when he thought upon a beautiful and innocent queen abandoned to destruction by a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. "The age of chivalry is gone!" calmly observes the calculating sophists, who lead the mind of the moderns, and persuade them that the world is hastening, under their influence, to a period of increased light and civilization, —a most convenient maxim to establish from the declamation of an orator! for that is as much as to hold, that there is no longer occasion for men to be generous and devoted, faithful and indifferent to

[1] Rheinische Geschichte, I, 393.

their own selfish interest, full of high honour; not aiming to follow the erring multitude, but emulous of imitating the example and of joining the society of the celestial citizens: an assertion, however, which carries with it the less weight from its being characteristic of a class of men, whose first principles are all contained in similar propositions, with whom every age is gone but that of economists and calculators. On the other hand, we are told by some, that it is an error to speak of the age of chivalry; for that "chivalry never existed excepting in brilliant fictions."[1] In opposition to these opinions, I shall endeavour to shew that chivalry, in some form or other, is coeval with human society, and that it must continue to exist with it till the end of time; but that, under the influence of the Christian religion, it is infinitely ennobled, and even assumes many general features wholly new, which must be examined previous to engaging in any of the detailed views of the heroic age of Christianity, which will occupy the succeeding books.

The error which leads men to doubt of this first proposition consists in their supposing that tournaments and steel panoply, and coat-arms, and aristocratic institutions, are essential to chivalry; whereas these are, in fact, only accidental attendants upon it, subject to the influence of time, which changes all such things, new-moulding them into a countless diversity of forms, to suit each race of new-born fancies.

Cuncta fluunt; omnisque vagans formatur imago.

In the common acceptation of the word, chivalry, as a learned French writer observes, "did not create a new system,—it only extended and refined

[1] Sismondi, Hist. des Français, Introduct. p. 22.

an old."[1] Chivalry is only a name for that general spirit or state of mind which disposes men to heroic and generous actions, and keeps them conversant with all that is beautiful and sublime in the intellectual and moral world. It will be found that, in the absence of conservative principles, this spirit more generally prevails in youth than in the later periods of men's lives; and, as the heroic is always the earliest age in the history of nations, so youth, the first period of human life, may be considered as the heroic or chivalrous age of each separate man: and there are few so unhappy as to have grown up without having experienced its influence, and having derived the advantage of being able to enrich their imaginations and to soothe their hours of sorrow with its romantic recollections. The Anglo-Saxons distinguished the period between childhood and manhood by the term "cnihthad," boyhood; a term which still continued to indicate the connexion between youth and chivalry, when knights were styled children, as in the historic song beginning,

Child Rowland to the dark tower came:

an excellent expression, no doubt; for every boy and youth is, in his mind and sentiments, a knight, and essentially a son of chivalry. Nature is fine in him. Nothing but the circumstance of a most singular and unhappy constitution, and the most perverted and degrading system of education, can ever totally destroy the action of this general law; therefore as long as there has been, or shall be, a succession of sweet springs in man's intellectual world; as long as there have been, or shall be, young men to grow up to maturity, and until all youthful life shall be dead, and its source withered for ever, so long must

[1] Discours Prélim. de l'Hist. Littéraire des Troubadours.

there have been, and must there continue to be, the spirit of noble chivalry. To understand, therefore, this first, and, as it were, natural chivalry, we have only to observe the features of the youthful age, of which examples surround us; for, as Demopho says of young men,—

> Ecce autem similia omnia; omnes congruunt:
> Unum cognoris, omnes noris——[1]

Mark the courage of him who is green and fresh in this old world. Amyntas beheld and dreaded the insolence of the Persians; but not so Alexander the son of Amyntas, ἅτε νέος τε ἐὼν καὶ κακῶν ἀπαθὴς, says Herodotus, οὐδαμῶς ἔτι κατέχειν οἷός τε ἦν.[2] When Jason had related to his companions the conditions imposed by the king, the first impression was that of horror and despondency, till Peleus rose up boldly, and said,—

> ὥρη μητιάασθαι ὅ κ' ἔρξομεν· οὐ μὲν ἔολπα
> βουλῆς εἶναι ὄνειαρ, ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ κάρτεϊ χειρῶν.

If Jason be unwilling to attempt it, I and the rest will undertake the enterprise; for what more can we suffer than death! and then instantly up rose Telamon and Idas, and the sons of Tyndarus, and Œnides, although

> —— οὐδέ περ ὅσσον ἐπανθιόφντας ἰούλους
> ἀντέλλων·

But Argus, the Nestor of the party, restrained their impetuous valour, and represented the great advantage of endeavouring to persuade Medea to help them with her enchantments; and while he spake, the gods seemed to approve by sending a dove, which took refuge from a hawk in the bosom of Jason. The sanction of heaven was said to attend

[1] Terent. Phormio, I, 2. [2] V, 19.

this advice, and to this authority the youthful heroes were willing to assent. The Grææ, representing treasons, were described by the ancients as grey-headed, and like old women from their birth, to shew that youth has no concern in the cares, suspicions, and trepidations with which such traitors are continually vexed. So it is with the spirit of chivalry. When Olivier de Clisson had escaped from the dungeon of the castle of Hermine at Vannes, where he had been treacherously seized by Montfort and imprisoned, he hastily repaired to Paris to demand justice of the king. Charles VI. was moved by the wrongs which had been suffered by his constable, but in promising to take them into consideration, he added, "I must express my astonishment, that you should have committed so great a fault as to let yourself be conducted into the castle of Hermine by your most cruel enemy. The Duke of Bretagne caught you as if you had been a child!" "Eh! monseigneur," replied Olivier, "il me montroit de si beaux semblans que je ne lui osois pas refuser."[1]

To break forth in the praise of chivalry might expose one to the reproof which Antalcidas passed upon the sophist who was going to recite the praise of Hercules, till he was stopped by the question, "Who reviles him?" And yet there are not a few men who speak reproachfully and disdainfully of the majestic world to which it introduces us. To praise youth is, indeed, to praise chivalry, and therefore there can be no want of testimonies to its excellence.

It is a remark of Lord Bacon, "that, for the moral part, youth will have the pre-eminence, as age hath for the politic"; and this has always been the opinion, which is allied to that other belief, that

[1] Vies des Grands Capitaines François du Moyen Age, t. IV, 142.

the heroic (the Homeric age) was the most virtuous age of Greece. When Demosthenes is desirous of expressing any great and generous sentiment, he uses the term νεανικὸν φρόνημα; and it is the saying of Plautus, when surprise is evinced at the benevolence of an old man, "benignitas hujus ut adolescentuli est." There is no difference, says the philosopher, between youthful age and youthful character; and what this is, cannot be better evinced than in the very words of Aristotle: "The young are ardent in desire, and what they do is from affection: they are tractable and delicate; they earnestly desire, and are quickly appeased; their wishes are intense, without comprehending much, as the thirst and hunger of the weary: they are passionate and hasty, and liable to be surprised by anger; for being ambitious of honour, they cannot endure to be despised, but are indignant when they suffer injustice: they love honour, but still more victory; for youth desires superiority, and victory is superiority, and both of these they love more than riches; for as to these, of all things, they care for them the least. They are not of corrupt manners, but are innocent, from not having beheld much wickedness; and they are credulous, from having been seldom deceived; and sanguine in hope, for, like persons who are drunk with wine, they are inflamed by nature, and from their having had but little experience of fortune; and they live by hope, for hope is of the future, but memory of the past, and to youth the future is everything, the past but little: they hope all things, and remember nothing; and it is easy to deceive them, for the reasons which have been given, for they are willing to hope, and are full of courage, being passionate and hasty, of which tempers it is the nature of one not to fear, and of the other to inspire confidence: and they are easily put to shame, for they have no resources to set

aside the precepts which they have learned; and they have lofty souls, for they have never been disgraced or brought low, and they are unacquainted with necessity: they prefer honour to advantage, virtue to expediency, for they live by affection rather than by reason; and reason is concerned with expediency, but affection with honour: and they are warm friends and hearty companions, more than other men, because they delight in fellowship, and judge of nothing by utility, and therefore not their friends; and they chiefly err in doing all things over-much, for they keep no medium; they love much, and they dislike much, and so in everything; and this arises from their idea that they know everything, and their faults consist more in insolence than in actual wrong: and they are full of mercy, because they regard all men as good, and more virtuous than they are, for they measure others by their own innocence; so that they suppose every man suffers wrongfully."

In this admirable picture of the youthful mind we behold the characteristic features, and as it were the ground-work, of natural chivalry. With some men, indeed, there may be a winter in the spring-tide to become afterwards a spring-tide in winter; youth may be perverted by the doctrine of sophists, and so bent from its natural direction as to become political and suspicious, and riper years, undeceived and renewed by religion, may enjoy the bright visions of imagination and innocence; but the natural order which prevails in the moral world is otherwise, and the time of issuing from youth is often distinguished by the decline and fall of a kingly and heroic state in the little world of man's soul. With the sentiment of chivalry happiness withdraws, attended by all the raptures which belonged to that lively, jocund, and, as I may say, dancing age; for what is termed entering the world,

assuming its principles and maxims, is nothing else but departing into those regions to which the souls of the Homeric heroes went sorrowing:

ὃν πότμον γοόωσα, λιποῦσ' ἀνδροτῆτα καὶ ἥβην.

Generous souls are like those birds of paradise which are found on the banks of the Nile. When caught and confined, they never cease lamenting and struggling till they die, or are suffered again to fly away. To the spirit of chivalry there are, however, many other qualities belonging, the indications of which will always supply us with means of tracing its existence. Among them may be noticed, in the first place, an ardent admiration for excellence; which Crassus describes as "studium et ardorem quendam amoris, sine quo in vita nihil quidquam egregium nemo umquam assequetur."[1] A beautiful instance of this occurs in the romance of Perceforest. Lyonnel, discoursing with Perceforest, without knowing who the stranger was, had said of him, "Sachez qu'il nest riens au siecle que je desire tant que de devenir chevalier de sa main." Perceforest discovered himself to the youth, and then Lyonnel threw himself on the neck of the horse and kissed his thigh; and when the king saw the goodness of the squire, he alighted from his horse, undid his helmet, and then embraced and kissed the child. "Ha, sire," said Lyonnel, "vous faictes oultrage qui etes descendu pour ung garson que je suis." "Lyonnel," said the king, "je suis descendu encontre le bien que j'entens qui sera encores en vous."

The same principle breaks out in the ardour with which men admire the excellence that is exhibited in books of philosophy, of history, or fiction, though youth, profound in its simplicity, will never believe excellence to be fiction. When Turenne was a lad,

[1] Cicero, de Oratore, I, 30.

he used to delight in reading Quintus Curtius. An officer one day thought proper to tell him that it was but a romance. The young viscount was hurt to the last degree; and upon the officer continuing to rally him, he left the company, and sent him a challenge, which his mother, the Duchess of Bouillon, took care should end in a fête.[1] Pompey, it appears, had, in like manner, absolutely resented the criticism of Dionysius Halicarnasseus, when he censured the writings of Plato.[2] Chivalry induces men to conduct themselves in the same manner with respect to their favourite author as to their friend. When the queen, in the Morte d'Arthur, said that Sir Launcelot was "a fals traytour knyghte; 'Madame,' said Sir Bors, 'I pray you saye ye not so; for wete you wel, I maye not here such langage of hym.'"[3] The most surprising instance of this disposition is recorded by an ancient writer, who says that Cleombrotus, having read the Phædo of Plato, was seized with such a desire for the future life, that he threw himself into the sea. This disposition of mind is described by Cicero to all his fellow-disciples in philosophy, when he says, "There is not one among us who, when he reads the books of Plato, so admirably written, in almost all of which Socrates is represented, does not suspect (although they are divinely written) that something still greater belongs to him upon whom they are written. To me, indeed," he says again, "those ancients seem to have embraced something more in their minds, and to have seen far more than can be perceived by any of our contemporaries."[4] It may be permitted me to urge this confession upon those who would engage in a review of our heroic age, and entreat them, in regarding their ancestors, "ut majus quiddam de illis

[1] Histoire du Vicomte de Turenne par Ramsay, p. 5.
[2] Dion. Halicarnass. Epist. ad C. Pomp.
[3] II, 342.
[4] De Oratore, lib. III, 4, 5.

quam quantum a nobis exprimitur suspicentur." Assuredly such a sentiment will not lead them from the truth. But this disposition of chivalry does not terminate with a mere belief in excellence, for it renders men anxious to promote it and to multiply the objects of its love and reverence. At the grand tournament described in the Morte d'Arthur, when Sir Gareth had overthrown a multitude of knights: "'So God me help,' said king Arthur, 'that same knyght is a good knyght;' wherefore the kyng called unto hym Syr Launcelot, and praied hym to encounter with that knyght. 'Syr,' sayed Launcelot, 'I may wel fynde in my heart for to forbere hym as at this tyme, for he hath hadde travail ynough this day; and when a good knyght doth so wel upon some day, it is no good knyghtes parte to lette hym of his worship: peradventure,' said Launcelot, 'he is best byloved with this lady of all that ben here, for I seewell he payneth hym and enforceth hym to do great dedes; and therefore as for me, this day he shall have the honour; though it lay in my power to put hym fro it, I wold not.'"[1] The same spirit breathes in that fine answer which is recorded of Charlemagne, when the traitor Ganelon, in an old romance, desired him to take the horse upon which young Galien was mounted, saying, that it was the finest in the world; to which the emperor replied, "Il convient mieux à Galien qu'à moi."

From the love of excellence is inseparable a spirit of uncompromising detestation for everything base and criminal. Thus Froissart describes Gaston de Foix, who "in every thyng was so parfite, that he cannot be praised too moche; he loved that ought to be beloved, and hated that ought to be hated"; adding a testimony to his practice, that "he never had myscreant with hym."

[1] Vol. I, 233.

King Arthur, hunting in a great forest, strayed away from his company, and wandered for a long time, till at length his weary horse sank under him: so he proceeded on foot to look for some lodging. Exhausted with fatigue he lay down and fell asleep, and after awhile when he awoke, he found himself in a dark prison, hearing on all sides of him many complaints of woeful knights. "What are ye that so complain?" said Arthur. "We ben here xx. knyghts prisoners," said they, "and some of us have lain here seven yere, and some more, and some less." "For what cause?" said Arthur. "We shall tell you," said the knights. "The lord of this castle is Sir Damas, and he is the falsest knight that liveth, and full of treason, and a very coward as any liveth; and he hath a younger brother, a good knight of prowess, Sir Ontzlake, and this traitor Damas, the elder brother, will give him no part of his livelode. And great war hath ben between them both, but Ontzlake had ever the better, and ever he profereth Sir Damas to fyght body for body, or else to find a knyght to fyght for him. Unto that Sir Damas hath granted to find a knyght, but he is so evil beloved and hated, that there is never a knyght will fyght for him: and when Damas saw this, that there was never a knyght would fyght for him, he hath dayly lain await with many knyghts with him, and taken all the knyghts in this country to see and espye his adventures; he hath taken them by force, and brought them to this prison; and so he took us severally as we rode on our adventures, and many good knyghts have died in this prison for hunger, to the number of xviii. knyghts. And if any of us all that here is or hath been would have fought with his brother Ontzlake, he would have delivered us; but for by cause this Damas is so fals and so full of treason, we would never fyght

for him to die for it."[1] Εἰς τὰς λατομίας was their cry, as it had been of old that of Philoxenus in the presence of a tyrant. In all this we can observe the operation of a principle which acted as great a part in the moral world of chivalry as in its political —the consciousness of personal obligations, and therefore, in some sense, of personal importance;— the opinion that there is a spiritual monarchy, constituting to each man individually the kingdom of his soul, in which he has to govern according to truth and justice, and to oppose error and evil without regard to the policy of other powers.[2] Friedrich Schlegel has made some excellent observations on the danger of abandoning this principle in relation to all the great duties of life. His words are these. "The point wherein human charity chiefly fails is, in its being too much concerned with general views and grand abstractions, but not sufficiently exercised in the little detail of daily life, in the innumerable cases of trouble and care which it might be employed in relieving. As with the charity, so it is with the faith of men; it is not sufficiently personal; it is not sufficiently confiding. The greatest part of men have by far a too high opinion of their own worth, and an over-great confidence in their own strength; but of their vocation, of the end to which they are destined, they have, in general, a sense far too low; they do not believe in it; they look upon their calling and destiny and themselves as from the point whence they survey the whole world: but in this they are guilty of a great error and of great injustice, for every man is a separate world in himself—a true microcosmus in the eyes of God and in the plan of the whole creation. Every man has a separate calling and an

[1] Morte d'Arthur, vol. I, 99.
[2] Luis of Granada, Cat. part I, c. 33.

end peculiar to himself."[1] As in the warfare of the middle ages, when each man was regarded as a power, so in the spiritual combats of all times, chivalry requires every man to believe that he is personally called upon to pronounce between error and truth, injustice and justice, vice and virtue.

It may be observed also, with respect to the great characteristics of chivalry, that at all times a foundation of honesty for honour to rest upon is indispensable: "Where I could not be honest," says Albany, "I was never valiant": and that, where duty and honour call, no fear of suffering can cause chivalry to fail. The boys of Sparta would endure whipping till their very entrails saw the light through their torn flesh, and some of them to death, without crying or complaint. The whole system is more concerned with action than with discourse, and therefore may often render useless the contrivances of legislation; according to the opinion of Charillus, who being asked why Lycurgus had made so few laws, replied, "they who use few words have not occasion for many laws."

It would be foreign from the design of these sheets to attempt to enter into any deep investigation respecting the original sources of chivalry in the human soul; nor, indeed, can such an inquiry be desired; for theology has long since revealed the only spring from which all virtue must proceed. The sophist knew by the young man's tone of voice, or manner of opening his lips as he spoke, that he would never make a sophist:

πῶς ἂν μάθοι ποθ' οὗτος ἀπόφευξιν δίκης;[2]

Scipio Africanus was wont to commend that saying in Xenophon, that the same labours of warfare were easier far to a general than to a common soldier, because he was supported by the great

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, 156. [2] Aristoph. Nubes, 874.

appetites of honour, which made his hard marches nothing but stepping forward and reaching at a triumph; but the difference of character observable in men does not depend, as this would imply, upon any accident or circumstance of their situation. The full development of the chivalrous spirit seems to depend upon the direction which is given to that agitation of mind peculiar to man, from which the ancients argued in support of its celestial origin,[1] and this secret principle of action is often too powerful for any circumstances to resist.

Buesching[2] gives a passage from a great chivalrous poem, called the Knight Gamuret, by Wolfram von Eschenbach, which relates how this Knight Gamuret, having left his wife in France, great with child, fell in battle against the Paynims of Asia. Shortly after his death, the lady was delivered of a son, who was called Parzifal [Perceval], whom she carried away into a wild forest, that the child might be separated entirely from the life and bustle of the world. Then she gave orders to all the men and women who attended upon her, that they should never speak of knighthood; "for," said she, "if the dear one of my heart should become aware of chivalry, then must great suffering be his portion." So he was kept in ignorance of knighthood, of what love and honour commanded, and within the bounds of the forest was all his knowledge confined. Here he ranged about, with his own hands cut a bow and arrows, with which he might shoot the birds of the forest, and, with a small javelin, slew wild beasts. Thus, without knighthood and the world's titles, he waxed strong, and chivalrous power was instilled into his limbs. He was still a youth when first he beheld a knight appearing in his pomp, like a god, who told

[1] Quinctil. lib. I, c. 1.

[2] Ritterzeit und Ritterwesen.

him that he was a knight, and that King Arthur conferred knighthood. Then did Parzifal run to his mother, and tell her what he had seen and heard. From that hour nothing could stay his departure. Upon leaving his mother, in order that she might be sure of his return, she dressed him like a fool instead of a knight; but he became, in process of time, one of the stoutest and most glorious knights whose deeds are the theme of ancient minstrelsy. As nature, therefore, when favoured and assisted, seems to impel men to pursue the generous paths of chivalry, the debt is repaid by a return of affection and docility; for nothing harmonises with the spirit of chivalry but what is at least consistent with the grace and majesty of nature. Her simple pleasures and her grand distinctions are ever uppermost in the thoughts of this favoured part of men; even the most pompous and imposing contrivances of art seem never more than half enjoyed by them. The ancients said that Erichthonius, though of a comely body from the middle upward, had his thighs and legs like the tail of an eel, small and deformed; of which monstrosity being conscious, he became the first inventor of the use of chariots, whereby his deformed parts might be concealed. Rather than descend to a life of effeminate luxuries, chivalry would seek to imitate the creatures, "whose naked natures live in all the spite of wreakful heaven."

From all this it appears, that nothing can indicate a more complete ignorance of the essential principles which give birth to chivalry, than the assertion, that any age can witness its final and utter extinction. Times may be more or less favourable to its development, and perhaps circumstances may combine, so as for an interval to stifle its generous sparks; and then every bright image may seem to withdraw, without a promise of return. Such was King Arthur's sorrow when his knights were about to

depart in search of the Saint Grayle, "the teres fylle in his eyes, and he said, 'ye have sette me in grete sorrowe; for I have grete doubte that my true felowship shalle never mete here more ageyne. I wote wel ther shall no manner of joye remedye me.'" But however it may be with the little world of one book, in nature there is no such final departure of all chivalry. The noble fellowship of the round table cannot be broken for ever; but fresh aspirants will again appear to revive the generous lists, to keep ahead of the degraded world, and to bear the palm alone.

What is accidental, and not necessarily connected with the inmost soul of chivalry, may indeed have its destined period, beyond which it may be obsolete and lifeless. The plumed troop, and the bright banner, and all quality, pride, pomp, and circumstance of feudal manners, may pass with the age which required them; but what essentially belongs to this great cause must endure to the end. Although all other things are uncertain, perishable, and liable to change, this is grafted upon deep and indestructible roots, which no time can weaken, and no force remove.

XV. So far we have considered the general characteristics of chivalry, as existing under all circumstances; but our object would be only imperfectly obtained, if we did not also take a general view of those features belonging to it which seem to have an especial reference to the Christian religion, and which render it so interesting a portion of the Church of God: a proposition which should not startle any intelligent observer; for it will be shewn hereafter, that as there is a spirit and a language, so there is also a system of philosophy belonging peculiarly to chivalry, the main principles of which I shall endeavour to point out in the course of the present book, which is yet but an introduction to

others, in which all these propositions will be exemplified and established in detail. In the first place, every Christian has been told, that in order to profit by the divine words of life, he must receive them as a little child, that is to say, according to what we have lately seen, he must receive them in a generous and noble spirit, to which the epithet of chivalrous may be justly applied. Nor let this position sound as if it were an extravagant novelty; for there might be no end of citing passages from the writings of the saints, in which they shew how religion takes advantage of those dispositions which are commonly referred to mere generosity and nobleness of nature. Father Luis of Granada, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Francis de Sales, and Fénelon, may be distinguished as having repeatedly availed themselves of the principles of chivalry, to induce men to turn from vanity to God. It is the constant practice of holy writers to shew that nothing can be more generous than humility, more noble than perseverance, more heroic than the whole spirit of a Catholic Christian. As, therefore, before the coming of our Lord, there was evidence to believe *à priori*, that if it should please God to make a divine revelation of his will to mankind, all minds which were under the influence of the philosophy ascribed to Socrates would have hailed it with the utmost joy and gratitude, while the world in general, the philosophers so called, would have rejected it; in like manner it must have appeared highly probable to every wise observer in these ages, that this youthful or chivalrous spirit would have afforded soil in a manner previously prepared, and peculiarly favourable for the reception of the divine seed. This fresh and ingenuous spirit would not, like the corrupted dregs of the heathen world, become a burden and injury, instead of a source of vigour to the Church. St. Augustin says, "he who was formerly

an avowed Pagan, having clothed himself in the robe of a Christian, is now, under the veil of religion, a concealed evil."[1] Such would never be the consequence of a conversion, where the mind of chivalry existed. That mind would embrace the doctrine of the Cross of Jesus with sincerity and ardour. It would be insensible to that human respect which is so great an obstacle to virtue, and particularly to the sanctification of Christians. There have been Catholics who appeared to take a pride in imitating the adversaries of their holy religion, and in being associated in friendship with them; no one so dear to them as he who had most daringly reviled their holy faith; men who were ashamed of everything but what they had solemnly renounced in their baptismal vows; ashamed of serving God only without regard to the opinion of the world; ashamed of the Cross; unwilling that a crucifix should be seen in their apartments; afraid to sign themselves like all faithful Christians at the accustomed time; and afraid, or disdainful of all the exercises of a penitential life; as if they could gain anything by professing to believe with Catholics, and living after the manner of the Gentiles; ashamed of some or all of the sublime and beautiful practices prescribed by religion, which are dear to those who love the Church of Jesus Christ; and harassed with continual fear, lest they should not always be seen invested with the livery of the world, and ready to concede to it the sentiments of a Christian, and even the noble qualities of youth. The spirit of chivalry in religion would despise and abhor this ungenerous and servile disposition, under whatever name it might be recommended, whether extolled as liberality, moderation, or prudence: it is a disposition not only essentially opposed to divine charity, but also to

[1] In Ps. XLVIII; Serm. II, § 1.

every sentiment of human honour; it denotes a want of faith; it is wholly of the world, and characteristic of those who are of the world. It is deceived too in all its wisdom. It was afraid of being despised, and, lo, its endeavour to avoid contempt is the secret scorn of the very world that it would propitiate; whereas those who despised the ridicule or censure of the world, while they were guided by the discipline of the Church, who laughed at the world's charge of superstition or idolatry, are seen invested with an heroic dignity that is able to intimidate even the base assailants, whose front of brass is never proof against the power of holy innocence. "Fear them not," were the divine words; "be not afraid of their countenance." "Faciem tuam valentiorem faciebus eorum, et frontem tuam duriorem frontibus eorum."[1] The results of this fatal vanity of concession continually verify the divine sentence, "qui timet hominem, cito corruet;"[2] and the justice of what St. Jerome said, "Let not those who make profession of being the disciples of truth, follow the erring multitude; for it is most safe to follow him who saith, 'He is the way, the truth, and the life.'"[3] When the noble Paul Kostka, brother of St. Stanislas, was converted to religion, he chose for his motto the words which he afterwards caused to be engraven upon his tomb, "Non erubesco evangelium." It is essentially an heroic sentiment to set at defiance the judgment of the world when honour is at stake. Again, the spirit of indifference and tepidity would be alike unknown to chivalrous devotion. "It is my noble father's maxim," St. Ludovico di Gonzaga used to say, "that when a man of honour undertakes an office, he ought to discharge its duties with the utmost fidelity. Since my father has practised

[1] Ezech. III, 8. [2] Prov. XXIX.
[3] Epist. ad Celant.

this lesson for the things of the world, is it not my duty to practise it for the things of God?" Such would be the fervour of chivalrous piety: once subdued by the love of Jesus, it would cast away all other remembrance but that of his passion, it would seek no other consolation but that of his adorable sacraments; it would desire no other science but to know him who died for us, and who rose again to redeem us by his blood, that we should no more live to ourselves, but to our Lord who died for us, and who rose again.[1] It was this spirit which animated the centurion when he spoke the words which the Church teaches her children to repeat when they approach the fountain of grace and blessedness. The saints have only amplified them, for they contained the substance of all that the spirit of man can demand. "O sweet Saviour, do thou but speak to my heart, and the tumults of the soul shall be hushed before thee. Do thou but speak, and nothing shall distract my mind from the attention it owes thee; speak in those accents of peace which were promised to thy people: say to my soul, I am thy salvation."

The Desire of all nations, the great Restorer of mankind hath appeared, hath visited, and wrought the redemption of his people. Therefore from henceforth the world may lift up its standard, and boast of honour, and generosity, and noble sentiments, with as much emphasis and solemnity of phrase as it will; its slaves may be the only free, its base, cruel ministers may be all liberal, all honourable men; but the time is for ever past for its language to have power over any but its genuine children; there is now a rallying point and a rival banner to direct and animate those who are not of the world, who scorn its service, and who abhor its

[1] B. Esaiæ Abbat. Orat. 27; Bibl. Patrum, XIII.

despotism. "Omnis qui est ex veritate audit vocem meam," said Christ to Pilate; and we may set this down as a certain consequence, that excepting in cases of unavoidable ignorance, where this orient from on high hath not dawned, in hostility to the world's claims, our Saviour Jesus Christ is become the chief and eternal King of all the really free, generous, and heroic spirits that exist upon the earth; that it is to him alone they come, offering the homage of undivided love; and that, renouncing allegiance to the world, scorning its pretensions, and regarding with the utmost degree of contempt and detestation its haughty standard of false honour, and false liberty, and false virtue, it is to his church they repair, from every region, and language, and people, to confirm their union, to proclaim their fidelity, to take up the arms, with which they are to fight against the ruler of this world, to secure their deliverance from the hand of their enemies, and to receive power from their adorable Lord, who is enthroned in the centre of their hearts, to serve him without fear all their days, in holiness and justice. "Vidimus, et Venimus," is from henceforth the cry of genuine chivalry. "Procidentes adoraverunt eum," says the evangelist of the holy kings; and in their train we may behold a multitude which no man can number, which continues to press on in succession to the feet of Jesus; each generation contributing, in its turn, to augment this religious chain, and to pay its tribute to the divine Redeemer. "Et procidentes adoraverunt eum." The Divine will, expressed in the sentence, "Præbe, fili, cor tuum mihi," seems to have a special regard to the disposition of souls like that of the knightly Ignatius, who had but one desire—"O! utinam facere possim ut omnis terra adoret te, et psallat tibi."[1] In proceeding to shew the features of the

[1] Exercitia Spiritualia, VIII, 2.

chivalrous character, which are peculiarly favourable to the reception of the Christian religion, we may remark that there was a disposition among the proud and pharisaical part of the heathen world, expressly inculcated by the sophists, and nourished by all the established systems of religion, which would be most hostile to the extension of Christianity, and from which the spirit of chivalry, wherever it existed, would be free. The character and effects of this disposition are described by St. Augustin, when he says, "Many glory in their works; and you will find many Pagans who are unwilling to become Christians because they imagine that they have all things sufficient to themselves for good life. 'What we have to do,' they say, 'is to live well and virtuously. What can Christ prescribe to us? That we should live well and virtuously. We live well and virtuously now.' These men," adds St. Augustin, "have glory, but not according to God; for not so our father Abraham."[1]

Now it is not too much to affirm that the spirit of chivalry is essentially opposed to such sentiments as these: it is honest, therefore it perceives the imperfection of its best virtue; it is susceptible of divine impressions, therefore it seeks for refuge, for peace, and for security, not in anything which belongs to its own weak and mortal nature, but in the mercy and power of God. Among the heathens it was evinced in those wanderings and unutterable expectations and desires, of which the Apostle speaks when he says that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now." Among those who fell from the unity of the faith, and were ranked without the Church, it would be manifested in the resolution of those few whose minds were not to be contented with the regularity of their own

[1] In Ps. XXXI; Enarrat. II, § 2.

lives or with the respectable morality of any nation, and which could never find rest until they were received into the ark of covenanted mercy; giving up their private judgment for submission to divine authority, and being determined to repose all their hopes for future happiness, not upon any principle of human philosophy, or deduction of their own reason, but solely upon obedience to the positive and simple command of God, however inscrutable and unfathomable that command might appear as to the object and reason for which it was delivered.

When we take up the instructions of holy men, it is most obvious that, if the form of their precepts were a little changed, the substance and spirit would seem to have been intended expressly for the promotion of honour and chivalry. There are many holy books which might lead us to ask, Do their authors write to instruct men in what is commonly regarded as the highest sentiment belonging to nobility, or do they address themselves to those who follow the professed path of spiritual perfection? If the spirit of the Catholic religion were not always the same, we might be tempted to say that, as the scholastic disputation was after the custom of chivalry in that time, when the combatant, man and horse, from head to foot, was enclosed in an iron panoply, composed of innumerable rings and chains, and when the great object was to force the enemy out of his saddle, here, too, the forces being often so equally matched that both the philosophic combatants, at the end of the battle, remained on the old spot, or were drawn back to it: in like manner, the divine discourses of holy men, in our heroic age, had assumed a kind of chivalrous tone from the prevailing spirit of noble knighthood. For instance, the holy abbot St. Columban's precepts to his monks are thus conveyed: "Audax in causa veritatis, timidus in contentionibus, supplex bonis,

insuperabilis malis, senioribus obediens, junioribus concurrens, coæqualibus coæquans, perfectis concertans, melioribus non invidens, præcurrentibus non dolens, remorantibus non detrahens, provocantibus consentiens."[1] May it not be affirmed, that this is the way of chivalry as well as holiness? Chivalry is humble, and it detests the attendants upon exaltation; it prefers the lowest place and the simplest lodging; it prefers service to command; it wishes to join the chorus of admirers, not to be the object of its praise. The Duke of Gandia, upon arriving at Lisbon, was waited upon by a man of quality who had been despatched for that purpose by King Dom João III, who, in his compliments, giving him repeatedly the title of most illustrious lord, and asking him if he were not fatigued by his journey, received for a reply the intimation that his expressions were a greater source of weariness than the way had been; and a surgeon, who was called in to dress a wound which the duke had received on one occasion, observing that his lordship had received a great wound,—"You inflict a greater upon me," replied the duke, "by your manner of speaking." In religion, therefore, chivalry would be truly humble, and might assume for its motto the words which are on the tomb of Cardinal Beaufort in the old cathedral of Winchester, "Tribularer, si nescirem misericordias tuas." What St. Bonaventura says of St. Francis expressed the humility which was in harmony with this spirit: "In his own estimation he was but a sinner, when in truth he was the mirror and splendour of all kinds of holiness; and he was more pleased to hear himself the object of reproach than of praise." It belongs essentially to this spirit to feel how much occasion the soul has for some divine object to

[1] Bibliotheca Patrum, XII, Instruct. XIV.

supply its present vacuity, and to experience what the ancient poet termed

The eternal wound of love.

It feels, as Socrates says, that human efforts are not worthy of much earnest care, and yet it feels the necessity for having earnest care about some things: *τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πράγματα μεγάλης μὲν σπουδῆς οὐκ ἄξια· ἀναγκαῖόν γε μὴν σπουδάζειν.* "This seems an unfortunate condition," adds the sage. This is the state in which he found the soul of Alcibiades; and his finding him in this state of dissatisfaction was the sole ground which made him regard this representative of disordered chivalry with affection. "How, then," he continues, "can we remedy this condition? In this way, by shewing that God is worthy of all anxieties, *πάσης σπουδῆς ἄξιον.*"[1] This disposition is alluded to by St. Augustin, when he says that the grief of one who feels his wound is nearer to salvation than the insensibility of one who remains indifferent: "Vicinior est immortalitati sanitas dolentis quam stupor non sentientis." "This spirit is, therefore, peculiarly prepared for receiving the good news of the great sacrifice of propitiation; for acknowledging how great is the debt which it owes to the divine justice; for pondering upon all its past years, and lamenting that it should have so early turned away from God to follow vanity; for confessing that it has nothing to offer to the Lord that is worthy, with which it might kneel before the high God; that neither holocausts nor thousands of rams, nor yet its own blood, could expiate its guilt; that the blood of Christ alone could do it, with which it

[1] Plato de Legibus, VII.

might kneel before the Most High when it assisted at the sacrifice of the altar."[1]

But while this humble spirit, in accordance with truth and nature, characterised the mind which was tempered after the tone of chivalry, there was also in such minds a perfect sense of the dignity of the soul of man, and an anticipation of the high destiny which awaited it. The ancient sage expressed this sentiment, saying, "We must not agree to those who maintain that being a man, one should cherish the thoughts belonging to man, and being mortal, the thoughts which are mortal; but, as much as possible, we should immortalise ourselves, and do all things with a view of attaining to the highest life."[2] There is no occasion to point out that this disposition of mind would be peculiarly favourable to the reception of the Christian philosophy. Again, let it be noted well, that chivalry, like youth, is essentially devout. "Puer cœpi rogare te auxilium et refugium meum," says St. Augustin of himself.[3] It was a pretty couplet which formed the conclusion of some verses which were composed on the death of an angelic youth by one of his fellow-students in the college of St. Acheul:

> At præmatura doleam quid morte peremptum?
> Nam si ætate puer, vir pietate fuit.[4]

The proposition contained in it might, however, admit of being opposed. It is the first age of man that is admitted nearest the sanctuary. In all its examples and precepts, the Christian religion has especial provision for youth. "Christ," says St. Irenæus, "made himself an infant to infants, that he might sanctify them; he made himself a child to children, giving holiness to those of that age, to

[1] Bishop Chaloner's Meditations.
[2] Aristot. Ethic. lib. X, 7.
[3] Confess. I, 9.
[4] Souv. de S. Acheul, p. 11.

the end he might afford them, in his person, an example of piety, and sanctity, and subjection; he made himself a young man to young men, giving them a pattern, and sanctifying them for the service of our Lord."[1]

It was not the part of chivalry to merit the reproach which the hermit passed upon Gawayne, when he said to him, "It is longe tyme passed syth that ye were made knyghte, and never sythen thou servedest thy Maker, and now thou art soo old a tree, that in thee is neyther lyf ne fruyte; wherefore bethynke thee that thou yelde to our Lord the bare rynde, sythe the fiende hath the leves and the fruyte."[2]

Who need be told of the generous passion with which the soul of chivalry is possessed by the mere view of that beauty which has been given to creatures? "Behold it," says Luis of Granada, "in the person of Amon, son of David; all the vigour of whose soul is so occupied and suspended by the excess of this affection, that his frame is left without support, so that it seems consumed and withering away through weakness." If, then, the beauty of a creature has such power, what will not the infinite beauty of the divine goodness be able to produce, when the Holy Spirit, by the rays of its light, discloses to a pure and innocent soul some particle of this adorable beauty? If what is human has such force, how much more that which is divine? If nature is so powerful, how much more grace? or, rather, if such be the strength of the corruption of sin, what will not be within the power of grace, and the light of the Holy Ghost?[3]

To be always ready was the maxim of chivalry, which would accord well with its religious duties.

[1] S. Iren. adversus Hæreses, 39. [2] Morte d'Arthur, II, 362.
[3] Catechism, part II, ch. XI.

This was also the principle of the saints, whose death, precious in the sight of God, is often observed to be premature and sudden. Some have accomplished their course at twenty, others at sixteen, others at a still earlier age. One is preaching on the love of God, falls into an ecstasy, and sinks to the ground; on being raised up, he is found to be dead: such an instance lately happened in the cathedral of Rennes. Another dies in the act of blessing the people, with the ciborium in his hands; another while beginning to say mass with the words, "Introibo ad altare Dei." He thought he was about to mount to the material altar, but it was to that which is in heaven. The Duc de Montmorenci, in 1827, died in the act of kissing the Cross on Good Friday, in the church of St. Thomas Aquinas, in Paris. To be attentive and prompt to answer to the call of duty was another quality essential to chivalry; and what advantage might not be expected from such a disposition in regard to religion? "Amanti sat est indicare." Behold the character of chivalry: it knows not the word to-morrow, as St. Augustin says of a Christian. On the other hand, what does not religion fear in regard to those who evince a different disposition? "Cras" is the word of the reprobate, says St. Augustin, as "nunc" is of the just. It is a thing which kills many, the saying "cras, cras," and suddenly the door is shut, and they remain abroad with the raven cry, not having the sighs of the dove. Cras, cras, corvi vox est. The angel of the great council calls, and they deliberate. "They are called to go into God's vineyard," as Sir Thomas More says, "and between willing and not willing, they enter not there." "We read of wonderful examples concerning this subject," says Father Persons. "God says, 'Because I called, and you refused'; he does not say how many times or how long he did call. 'I stood

at the door and knocked,' but says not how often. Herod the father had a call given him, and that a loud one, when St. John the Baptist was sent to him, and his heart was so far touched, that he willingly heard him; but yet because he deferred the matter, he was cast off again, and his last doings were worse than his former. Herod the tetrarch, his son, had a call also,[1] when he felt a desire to see Christ; but because he answered not, it did him no good, but rather much harm. What a great call had Pilate given him, when he was made to understand the innocence of Christ, and his wife sent to him to mind him of it! No less a call had King Agrippa, when he said to St. Paul, 'In a little time thou persuadest me to be a Christian.' But because he deferred the matter, this motion passed away again." The great secret of spiritual perfection, expressed in the words of St. Ignatius Loyola, "hoc vult Deus," might serve as the motto of chivalry. God wishes me to stand in this post, to fulfil this duty, to suffer this disease, to be afflicted with this calamity, this contempt, this vexation. God wishes this: whatever the world and self-love may dictate, hoc vult Deus. I no longer live to myself, but to my King and Saviour. His will is my law. It was with such words that a holy pontiff prevailed in persuading the warlike youth of France to take up the Cross of Christ in defence of Christendom. "Warriors," he said, "who are continually seeking some vain pretence for war, rejoice now, for you have obtained one that is just and sufficient; now is the moment to shew whether you are animated with true courage. Soldiers of hell, become the soldiers of the living God!" In an instant the plain resounded with that devout and heroic cry of "Dieu le veut, Dieu le veut." In all works of

[1] Luke XI, 23; Matt. XIV.

chivalry, it was the constant object to impress the mind of heroes with a sense of a double warfare to which they were called, with the resolution to acquit themselves like men in a holy war, in a spiritual combat. "There are four kinds of chivalry," says Bartholomew Arnigio: "the first is the Catholic, which opposes all errors and heresies contrary to the doctrines of faith, in which Timothy, the disciple of the Apostle St. Paul, exercised himself as a good champion and soldier of Christ. The second is the spiritual, which sustains the combat against flesh and blood; for what else is the life of man but a warfare? The third is the votive, when men engage to defend Christendom against the infidels. The last is that which serves for wages, which comprises all who are employed against the enemies of temporal princes." But the grand distinction, with the sense of which all were to be deeply impressed, was that of the two standards—the one of Christ, the other of Lucifer; and it was when under the Cross, sicut bonus miles Christi,[1] that they felt themselves on the side of honour. They rose up as soldiers of the living God, and took from God's armoury a sword of ethereal temper, setting forward in full assurance of faith, arrayed in that panoply divine, which alone was able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. Never did the valour of chivalry appear so heroic as when it was employed in the war of a Christian. When the venerable Maréchal de Mouchy was led to execution for having protected priests and other devoted victims; as they were hurrying him from the Luxembourg, a voice was heard from the crowd saying, "Courage, Mouchy; courage, Mouchy." The hero turned to them who were by his side, and said, "When I was sixteen years of age, I mounted the breach for my

[1] 2 Tim. II, 3.

king; now that I am eighty-four, I shall not want courage to mount the scaffold for my God." Let us also mark well how prepared this spirit would be to suffer no affections of nature to prevail over its loyalty to Christ, who declared that whoever loved father, or mother, or children, more than him, was not worthy of him. Alonso de Guzman, duke of Medina, was governor of Tarifa in 1294, when it was besieged by a great army of the Moors. He was summoned to surrender; but he refused to open the gates. Then the Moors threatened to kill in his presence his young son, who had fallen into their hands. The voice of nature could not overcome his honour. With his own hands Alonso threw a dagger to the enemy from the top of the walls, pronouncing these generous words, which have become the motto of the house of Guzman, "Mas pesa el rey que la sangre,"—the king prevails over blood.[1] If the spirit of chivalry could cherish such sentiments towards an earthly sovereign, how would it be ready to abandon all that was dear to it in the world, when its adorable King and Saviour, Jesus Christ, should call upon it to make such a sacrifice; or should intimate that it was necessary, by a look like that which was sufficient to strike St. Peter to the heart, and to make his soul dissolve in tears of penitence!

The spirit of chivalry seems to have even a previous disposition to follow all the circumstances of piety. While the proud sensualist at Alstat is composing his book against monastic vows, the heroic knight of Biscay retires to Montserrat, consecrates himself to God in solitude, and, in his retreat at Manreza, frames those spiritual exercises which served to form one of the most illustrious companies that ever followed the standard of the cross of Jesus.

[1] Mazas, Vies des grands Capitaines Français du Moyen Age, tom. III, p. 220.

While disabled by his wound, in the castle of Loyola, this celebrated soldier was first awakened to the ardour of sanctity, by considering the love of the saints for solitude.[1] May it not be affirmed that this love entered into the character of chivalry? Witness even the champions of romance, who are often represented like St. Ignatius in the ruined chapel, which he found on the road-side between Sienna and Rome. "Thenne Syr Galahad came unto a mountayne, where he found an old chappel, and fond there no body, for alle was desolate, and there he kneled to fore the aulter, and besought God of holsome council."[2] From the recesses of forests that seem interminable, their desire is always to reach the monastery ere the bat hath flown his cloistered flight. Sir Galahad, says the romance, rode four days, and on the fourth day, after even-song, he came to a white abbey, and there he was received with great reverence and led to a chamber, and there he was unarmed, and then he was told of two knights of the Round Table who were in the church; and when they heard of his arrival, they came up to him and made him great solace. What a scene was that in the monastery of St. Just, when St. Francis Borgia came to visit the Emperor Charles V., who had not seen him since the time that he used to attend his court as Duke of Gandia! St. Thomas says that monks must aim at perfection, or else they deceive the generous and heroic men who constructed such venerable asylums for those who sought retirement and sanctity.[3] It was chivalry which founded and endowed and protected these houses of religion, in which, as St. Bernard says, men lived with greater purity, fell less often, rose again more quickly, walked with more prudence,

[1] Bouhours, Vie de St. Ignace, 12.
[2] Morte d'Arthur, II, 221. [3] I, IV, 29.

were more constantly refreshed with the spiritual dew of heaven, rested with less danger, died with greater hope.[1]

It was to these asylums that even temporal chivalry repaired for renovation and strength. In the college of the Jesuits at Spires, a celebrated minister of the imperial court, no less famed for deeds of arms than for wisdom in council, used to assist frequently during the times of spiritual retreat; and, on one occasion, while thus employed, despatches arriving, addressed to him, from the Emperor Ferdinand, he refused to open them till the exercises were at an end; sending back answer, that, as he was engaged in communication with the King of kings, he could take no thought for the affairs of an earthly monarch.[2]

This inclination of the spirit of chivalry to follow all the circumstances of piety might be traced through a long detail. The youthful mind is predisposed to love and admire everything that belongs to the Church,—the angelic occupations which she assigns to the young in the service of her altars, her ceremonies, her models of beauty and grace, her flowing vestments, her approved manners, her hours; for it is her holy fathers who are pleased with the salutation of an early tongue, and it is always some young observer of the morning sky who hears their first benedicite.

Chivalry required that youth should be trained to perform the most laborious and humble offices with cheerfulness and grace. How easy was the transition from this to feel the force of that sentence in the Imitation of Christ, "magnus honor, magna gloria, tibi servire, et omnia propter te contemnere." The Duke of Gandia had been accus-

[1] Hom. de Marg.

[2] Bellecius, Exercitia Spiritualia S. P. Ignatii de Loyola: Monita, p. 14.

tomed, according to the practice of his ancestors, to entertain a certain number of poor people every month in his castle, and to wait upon them, serving them with his own hands.[1] In like manner, it might be shewn that the spirit of chivalry, which abhorred a delicate and luxurious life, would be admirably prepared for obeying the commands of the Church, and for observing her discipline with strictness. Disdaining every unjust subjection, and therefore rejecting every authority but that of God, and that which is derived from him, the only motives which can command chivalry are drawn from religion. When the Duc de Bourbon and the Constable, in the name of the King of France, begged pardon of Philippe duke of Burgundy, for the death of his father, before the Cardinal of Sainte-Croix, Philippe replied, "qu'il pardonnoit pour l'amour de Dieu;" meaning to say, that no earthly inducement could have drawn such a promise from him. And when St. Ludovico di Gonzaga had succeeded in persuading the Duke of Mantua to be reconciled with his brother the Marquis Alfonso di Gonzaga, there were persons of great authority who suggested to the duke, that, since he was resolved to testify his reconciliation, he ought, at least, not to appear as having been induced to it solely by the persuasion of the young Ludovico, but that he ought to defer it to another time, in order to give satisfaction to the princes who had, from the first, been anxious to prevent the discord. But the duke replied, that he was resolved to finish the affair that moment, because he was induced to act so only by the arguments of the saintly child. Not that the spirit of chivalry is contrary to that of forgiveness. One of the first traits recorded of Sir Tristan is his petition that the life might be

[1] Vie de St. François de Borgia, II, 297.

spared of his step-mother, who had twice attempted to poison him: "he kneled before the kyng and besought him a bone: I byseech you of your mercy that ye will forgive it her. God forgyve it her and I doo; for Goddes love, I requyre you to graunt me my bone."[1] This noble sentiment tended to confirm men in the true principles of all Christian government. St. Ludovico di Gonzaga used to say, that it was characteristic of a mean and dastardly mind to obey any man from merely human motives, however they might be made to appear dignified.[2]

In its religion, chivalry would not be full of selfish views and crafty calculation. This is the spirit which the great St. Augustin so ardently desired to witness: "quæritis me, quia manducastis ex panibus meis. Propter carnem me quæritis, non propter spiritum." "How many only seek Jesus that they may derive temporal advantage!" These are the words of the holy father. "One has business, he seeks the intercession of clerks; another is oppressed by a person in power, he flies to the Church; one for this cause, another for that. With such men the Church is daily filled. Vix quæritur Jesus propter Jesum."[3] Chivalry is drawn to Christ because it loves "truth, happiness, justice, eternal life, all which is Christ," adds St. Augustin. "The soul is drawn by love. Da amantem, et sentit quod dico. Da desiderantem, da esurientem, da in ista solitudine peregrinantem atque sitientem et fontem æternæ patriæ suspirantem; da talem, et scit quod dicam. Si autem frigido loquor, nescit quid loquor."[4] This is not the spirit which prompts men to say, like those whom St. Bonaventura censures, "if I knew that I should die within a short period, I

[1] Morte d'Arthur, I, 249.
[2] Vie de St. Louis de Gonzague, par Cepari, p. 142.
[3] S. August. in Johan. Tractat. XXV, § 10. [4] Id. XXVI, § 4.

would prepare myself thus, and I would live in a holy manner; but this rather inspires them with the sentiment which he ascribes to perfection, to say, "if I knew for certain that I should live a thousand thousand years, it would be my wish to serve my God with as much holiness and zeal as if I knew that I should pass this very day from the world; for herein a son is distinguished from a mercenary and a slave."[1] "O my true life, happy life, which is hidden from the world and associated with Christ, which is at rest in God its centre! One thing is necessary to me, and one thing only do I seek. Let, therefore, the multitude of phantasms depart from before me, one only is my beloved, one only is my love, one only my Christ, my God. Nihil ergo sapiat, nihil delectet, nihil alliciat, nisi Jesus Christus, totus sit meus, totus sim suus, et fiat cor meum unum cum ipso, nihil me judicans scire vel amare vel affectare nisi Dominum Jesum Christum et hunc crucifixum."[2]

Not only was the spirit of chivalry that of obedience, but all its positive laws and institutions required the exercise of obedience. M. de Haller has shewn what would become of military order if the Protestant system were introduced into it.[3] That absolute will, which is so early developed in children, and for which every mother finds the necessity of providing some check, which still discovers itself in all the great relations of life, and in the history of the world itself, besides being the most pernicious of all the sources of destruction and error in the soul and in the life of men, is not only in a particular manner fatal to all the sentiments of generosity and self-devotion which are essential to chivalry; but absolutely incompatible with the exercise of the

[1] Stimulus Divini Amoris, pars II, c. XVI.
[2] Id. pars II, c. XVII. [3] Mémorial Catholique, Mai, 1828.

positive duties which it imposes, insomuch that chivalry can exist only where this will has been subdued.

Chivalry obeys from the bottom of the heart, like a child: love renders sweet what is otherwise most painful. This is the obedience required by religion. "Calicem Domini affectanter bibe, si amicus ejus esse, et partem cum eo habere desideras."[1] Chivalry seeks not its own will, but is content to wait till a higher power is pleased to afford it refreshment. It comes in sorrow, and weakness, and dereliction; and it returns from a visit to the fountain of graces, filled with strength, and courage, and joy.[2] Chivalry places its trust in God. Witness the counsel of the elder, in the shining palace, to Astolpho—

> But, son, ascribe not you the journey made
> To wit or worth, nor through your winged steed,
> Nor through your virtuous bugle had ye thriven,
> But that such helping grace from God was given.[3]

It seeks His glory; witness the reply of Astolpho to the Nubian king, which was also that of our Edward the Black Prince to Don Pedro, king of Castille[4]—

> If I shall prosper, be thy praises paid
> To God alone, who sent me to thy aid.
> Offer these vows to God, to him well due;
> To him thy churches build, thine altars rear.[5]

In connexion with this desire of referring all glory to God, there is a high and delicate sentiment belonging to the chivalrous spirit, which would admirably harmonise with the disposition required for the disciples of a crucified Lord, who received

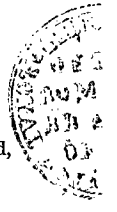
[1] De Imit. Christi, II.
[2] Bourdaloue, Retraite Spirituelle, tom. IV.
[3] Ariosto, XXXIV.
[4] Vies des grands Capitaines du Moyen Age, tom. III, 306.
[5] Ariosto, XXXIII.

nothing but outrages from those whom he came to save; for it is characteristic of loyal and generous chivalry to shrink from the applause or favour of men who have done any grievous injury to its chief, and to reject every offer of advantage which has been refused to him. If he has not been honoured, neither will those who love and serve him accept of honour; if he has not obtained justice, neither will they demand it; if he has been denied a triumph, neither will they assume the palm of victory. St. Augustin expressly appeals to this sentiment of chivalry, when he says, "Do you, who are a Christian, desire to be revenged and vindicated, and the death of Jesus Christ has not yet been revenged, nor his innocence vindicated? Vindicari vis Christianus, nondum vindicatus est Christus?" The same appeal occurs in the Imitation of Christ. "Christus habuit adversarios et oblocutores, et tu vis omnes habere amicos et benefactores? Si nihil contrarium vis pati, quomodo eris amicus Christi?"[1] How well was this spirit shewn by that crowd of noble youths who joined the company of St. Ignatius, and who, like the Duke of Gandia, could only be prevented, by the absolute prohibition of their spiritual father, from shedding their blood in honour of the flagellation of the Son of God! How well was it evinced by that royal martyr, in the Place Louis XV. at Paris, when his heroic spirit was about to break forth into flames of indignation on hearing that he was to be bound, till the saint who supported him gently reminded him that this would be only one more opportunity of imitating Jesus Christ, and in an instant behold his hands stretched out to receive the cords! All this, according to the great St. Ignatius, is in the highest degree chivalrous, as well as indicative of sanctity. "Quid enim magis

[1] Lib. II, 1.

heroicum quam malle cum Christo spreto, paupere, et afflicto contemni, egere, et pati, quam deliciis, honoribus, et divitiis frui? Quid generosius quam malle cingi corona spinea quam aurea, solum ob majorem cum Christo similitudinem?"[1]

Chivalry demands that it may be simple in its faith and perfect; and that it may not be called upon to engage in contention of words. Its religion is finely represented in the poem of Roderick:—



How calmly, gliding through the dark blue sky,
The midnight moon ascends!
The watchman on the battlements partakes
The stillness of the solemn hour; he feels
The silence of the earth, the endless sound
Of flowing water soothes him, and the stars,
Which in that brightest moonlight well-nigh quenched,
Scarce visible, as in the utmost depth
Of yonder sapphire infinite, are seen,
Draw on with elevating influence
Towards eternity the attemper'd mind.
Musing on worlds beyond the grave he stands,
And to the Virgin Mother silently
Breathes forth her hymn of praise.

An argumentative man once asked Zeno whether virtue were useful or not; he said that it was not, in order that he might not afford him an occasion of dispute, who evidently desired victory rather than truth.[2] When the Pythagoreans used to be asked concerning the gods in an impudent, light, careless manner, they always kept silence; and when Æschines, the Socratic, was reproved for remaining silent after being a scholar of Socrates,—"I do so," he replied, "because I have learned from Socrates as well how to be silent as how to speak." It was in accordance with the spirit of chivalry that Jaques made that fine answer which might be applied to every man who endeavours to disturb faithful Chris-

[1] Exercitia Spiritualia, Med. III, 1.
[2] Stobæi Florileg. II, 50.

tians with vain difficulties,—"He is too disputable for my company: I think of as many matters as he; but I give Heaven thanks, and make no boast of them." "Whether these laws be good or evil," says the wise Athenian in Plato, "you have one, the most excellent of all laws, 'not allowing youth to inquire whether such things are good or evil,' but inducing them with one voice, and as it were from one mouth, to agree that all these things concerning Heaven are well laid down; and if any one should speak otherwise, not so much as enduring to listen to him."[1] In the absence of truth and just authority, here was no doubt a great obstacle in the way of conversion; but this opinion shews the judgment of sound reason respecting the excellence of submission to an authority which can substantiate its claim. This spirit would, therefore, rather be charged with ignorance than be supposed to pretend to universal knowledge. This is so certain, that the spirit of chivalry has been frequently condemned for despising the profession of much knowledge, though it is only superior to the affectation of knowledge, and to whatever diverts the soul from its noble and heroic bent. Now this disposition is even sanctioned by the approval of human wisdom, as conveyed in the sentence, πολυμαθὴ ἢ ἀμαθὴ, which is ascribed to Cleobulus, one of the seven sages of Greece: while it is declared to be in accordance with the spiritual interests of a Christian life. "Quiesce a nimio sciendi desiderio: quia magna ibi invenitur distractio et deceptio."[2] What would have been thought of a knight who should have possessed in his ancestral hall an armory as rich as that which we see in the Tower of London or in the Museum of Paris, and who should never have put on a cuirass or drawn a sword to protect

[1] Plato de Legibus, I. [2] De Imitatione Christi, lib. I, 2.

the innocent people? What opinion then would chivalry entertain of a Christian who should have all the titles of Catholic religion without ever making use of the spiritual weapons which the Church offered him, to subdue his passions, to strengthen his heart, and to sanctify his soul? The religion of chivalry would, therefore, be found rather in action than in discourse: as St. Martin says, it is inclined of itself to few words, though patient to endure the loquacity of others.[1] Sophocles ascribes the true sentiment of chivalry to Theseus, when he makes this prince promise to protect Œdipus, and adds,

> *οὐ γὰρ λόγοισι τὸν βίον σπουδάζομεν*
> *λαμπρὸν ποιεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς δρωμένοις.*[2]

The reason and excellence of all this appears at once. It is with all noble sentiments as with religion: the substance is often diminished by being too largely expressed. "Quanto verborum parcior, rerum divitior," say the monks of St. Blase in the Black Forest, when describing the character of St. Hildegard. "Ceux qui parlent le plus de Dieu,"—says an old writer in his life of St. Elzear de Sabran; and the observation is true respecting those who speak of any noble sentiment,—"sont ceux bien souvent qui l'aiment le moins. Toute leur vertu s'evapore en babil et exhale en fumée de paroles." How clearly is this remark verified in those mysterious persons who are described by Tieck in his work entitled the Betrothing, who make innocence forget that there are such things as eyes, who pluck the very soul from chivalry, and make sweet religion a rhapsody of words! Hence it will be no ground of surprise to find the sons of Christian chivalry often possessed of great internal grace,

[1] De Quatuor Virtutibus: Bibl. Patrum, IV.
[2] Œdip. Col. 1140.

while action and obedience formed their exercise rather than the reading of learned books. St. Gregory illustrates the law of spiritual life by remarking, that the disciples who were favoured by our Lord's company and discourse going to Emmaus were not enlightened so as to know him while they only heard his words, but were quickly enlightened in fulfilling his commands in the exercise of hospitality and charity. "Audiendo præcepta Dei, illuminati non sunt: faciendo illuminati sunt."[1] And besides this, it was the simple, resigned, and placid spirit belonging to those who are practised in self-control and obedience, which religion requires, according to the sentence, "Cum simplicibus sermocinatio ejus."

The principles of chivalry would be broad and comprehensive in a religious sense as well as with regard to honour: "O morem præclarum disciplinamque, quam a majoribus accepimus, si quidem teneremus! sed nescio quo pacto jam de manibus elabitur." In its estimation every religious order had its particular end, its peculiar spirit, its distinct character, which qualified it more especially for some one kind of sanctification and perfection. One was retired in a profound solitude, interrupting silence only by the chanting of psalms and the sighs of prayer; another buried in an austere seclusion, purifying itself by the rigours of penitence and mortification; one had embraced the state of poverty, another gloried only in the sufferings of Jesus Christ; one was devoted, like the angels in heaven, to contemplation and praise; another united the virtues of its state with the apostolic zeal and with the pastoral functions. The love and veneration inspired by such blessed orders did not leave heroic men without similar sentiments for a new order,

[1] Hom. XXII.

which displayed one of the most perfect institutions that the spirit of Christianity has produced; which, as M. de Bonald says, "was born for combat, and yet most proper for peace; constituted for all times, all places, all employments; powerful and rich, while each member was poor and subject; esteemed by the great and respected by the people; uniting in an equal degree genius and piety, politeness and austerity, dignity and modesty, the wisdom of God and the science of men." This harmonious variety in the spiritual world was not a source of dissension and jealousy with men whose comprehensive and generous wisdom had not been impaired by the narrow trammels of any party-recollections, or by the degrading influence of those melancholy drudgeries which contract the understanding and wither the heart: chivalry had a soul for all perfection; it had a heart for all goodness: it had a mind for all truth. This was the spirit which religion required. "My dearest children," cries the holy abbot St. Columban, "agree quickly together, and be united in one, and unwilling to contend for ancient feuds; but rather be still, and deliver them to eternal silence and oblivion: and if there be any things doubtful, refer them to the divine judgment. If you are all true Christians, what else have you to defend besides the Catholic faith? For I cannot understand how a Christian can be against a Christian: he may contend concerning the faith; but, to whatever an orthodox Christian says, who rightly glorifies the Lord, the other will answer Amen; because he also, in like manner, loves and believes. Therefore, let all speak and think the same, that all may be Christians."[1] "The wicked contend with each other," says St. Augustin, "the good and the wicked contend with each other; but the good,

[1] S. Columban, Epist. IV, Bibl. Pat. XII.

when perfect, can never contend with each other."[1] "Meus est qui amat unitatem; non est meus qui separat," says St. Columban.[2] "It is not the knowledge of mysteries which is required; it is the constant meditation on the life of Christ which strengthens the mind against vain and perishable things, fortifies it against tribulations and adversity; instructs it against the snares and deceitful blandishments of the enemy."[3] "To imitate Christ is the highest and most perfect life. This is the rule and example of all perfection of life and virtue; to imitate Christ in his passion and in his death."[4] "Hæc est vita æterna, ut credant te verum Deum." "Here is the fruit of all the labours of the Church," says St. Augustin, "which she bears with groans and sorrow, and brings forth with gladness and rejoicing."[5]

Hear how William of Tyre speaks of an Armenian renegade—"Ivelinus nomine, vir apostata, qui relicta mediatoris Dei et hominum fide ad gentilem impietatem se contulerat."[6] This was the summary of a crusader's religion, the doctrine of faith in a mediator between God and man. Humility preserved faith perfect. A fable of the ancients is made to illustrate this by a great philosopher. Pentheus, by climbing up into a tree to behold the hidden sacrifices of Bacchus, was stricken with such a frenzy, that whatever he looked upon seemed to be double; so that he saw two suns, two Thebes, and, running towards Thebes, spying another Thebes, instantly turned back again, and so kept still running forward and backward; to shew that men who rashly pry into the secrets of divine mysteries are justly punished with perpetual inconstancy, and

[1] De Civitate Dei, lib. XV, c. 5.
[2] Epist. III.
[3] S. Bonaventura, Med. Vitæ Christi, I.
[4] Id. Stim. Divin. Amor. I, c. 4.
[5] De Cant. Dei, X, c. 4.
[6] XXI, 21.

with wavering and perplexed conceits; for, seeing the light of nature is one thing, and of grace another, it happens so to them as if they saw two suns and two Thebes; so they know not whither to go, but are distracted and unresolved, being carried about with sudden passions.

As the faith of chivalry was to be simple, so was its practice. "His reign was rather strange to the taste of many," says Jean Molinet, relating the death of a king of France, "mais il fina catholiquement," full of penitence and making restitution. This rule may be illustrated by observing that the Constable of France, Olivier de Clisson, in his last will, which may be seen in the Castle of Nantes, commands that all lands which he was not entitled to possess should be restored to their right owners; that the houses, mills, and farm-yards which had been demolished by his orders, in order to fortify towns and castles, should be rebuilt at his expense; and that 100,000 livres should be distributed among those who had suffered from his wars.[1] In short, the rule of manners was to be as simple and intelligible and as invariable as that of faith; a most important fact, which cannot be too often pressed upon the recollection of those who are within the sphere of the world's maxims, which would lead them at last to suppose that they may be Catholic Christians while they live like Gentiles or Turks.

Again, the spirit of chivalry is that of sacrifice, and essentially opposed to the desire of enjoyment whilst its companions are suffering hardship. When the two armies of Charles de Blois and of Montfort met before Aurai in Brittany, to contend for the duchy, the Sire de Beaumanoir, who was prisoner of the latter, after vainly endeavouring to prevent the combat, applied to Chandos, entreating him to

[1] Vies des grands Capitaines Français du Moyen Age, IV, 199.

use his interest with Montfort, that at least he might be permitted to take part in this cruel struggle, and to shed his blood like the rest; for, being prisoner on parole, the laws of war forbade him to fight without the permission of Montfort.[1] The same day of the battle, which was the festival of St. Michael, when the holy mysteries had been celebrated before the two armies, and the plain was about to become the scene of death, the Count of Blois, hearing the trumpet sound at the termination of mass, burst into tears, and said, "Oh, that I might ransom with my own blood that which is soon to be shed for me!" His confessor, a Franciscan friar, never quitted his side during the slaughter; he received him in his arms when he fell: and Charles breathed his last sigh in the act of striking his breast as a penitent. He had fought in compliance with what he was assured was his duty; for he detested war, and though he thus perished with arms in his hands, he was remarkable for his love of peace and retirement.

From all this it follows, that the spirit of chivalry in religion would be prepared to practise that mortification to which men are bound as Christians. The high and marvellous adventures to which the knights of romance devote themselves are but a continued course of hardship and suffering.

Of necessity also, to the spirit of chivalry must belong temperance and constancy. Cicero says, that Panætius, in praising the abstinence of Africanus, should have remembered that this was only to ascribe to him the character of the times in which he lived; all the heroes of that period merited the same praise.[2] The Athenian in Plato urges the example of Iccus the Tarentine, of Chryso, Astylus, Diopompus, and a multitude of others, who, through

[1] Vies des grands Capitaines Français du Moyen Age, III, 183.
[2] De Officiis, II, 22.

the love of glory, and the hopes of conquering at the Olympic games, observed a constant chastity. "If," he says, "these men abstained from what is commonly esteemed happiness, for the sake of being proclaimed victorious in wrestling or in a race, are our children incapable of similar abstinence for the sake of a far more glorious victory?"[1] Nay, independent of this consideration, the mind which accords with the excellence and dignity of nature will feel, as Cicero says, "how shameful it is to give way to luxury and pleasure, and how noble a thing it is to live soberly, in abstemiousness and continence."[2] How does he express the praise of men who were the pillars of Roman chivalry? "Lælium et Furium, moderatissimos homines et continentissimos"; and again, Metellus, "homo sanctissimus modestissimusque omnium."[3] When recording a noble sentiment, he says that it is worthy of Æacidæ,[4] of a race descended from that hero whom Plutarch calls "the holiest of the Greeks Ἑλλήνων ὁσιώτατον."[5] Vice and luxury are destructive of chivalry, and incompatible with its spirit, and with the object which it has to fulfil; as is said of the quest of the Sancgreal, its praise "may not be achieved but by virtuous lyvying, by hevenly dedes, and knyghtly deds in Goddes workes." The most renowned knight of the Round Table says upon one occasion, "As for to take my plesaunce, that wylle I refuse in pryncypal from drede of God. For such knyghts shall not be happy ne fortunate unto the wars, for either they shall be overcome with a sympler knyght than they be themselfe, or else they shall by such cursydness slee better men than they ben themself. And soo who that useth peramours shall be unhappy, and all thyng is unhappy that is aboute them."[6] The spirit of

[1] Plato de Legibus, VIII.
[2] De Officiis, lib. I, 30.
[3] Pro Archia Poeta.
[4] De Officiis, I, 13.
[5] In Theseo.
[6] Morte d'Arthur, I, 170.

chivalry is to the highest degree delicate and susceptible; once convince it that an action is base and criminal, and it shrinks from it with a depth of moral feeling such as leads the poet in the Indian legend to represent sin as something so incapable of concealment, that every transgression is not only known to conscience and to all divine spirits, but felt with a sympathetic shudder by those elements themselves which we call inanimate, by the sun, moon, fire, air, the heavens, the earth, the flood and the deep, as a crying outrage against nature, and a disarrangement of the universe. How much more then did it accord with Christian chivalry to feel sensible of the enormity of sin! "O my soul," cries the holy Ignatius, once the knightly paladin, "behold Jesus expiring on the cross to expiate thy sins! Canst thou view him and not dissolve in tears? At this tragedy the sun is darkened, and the rocks are rent, and the Gentiles return striking upon their breasts; and dost thou remain unmoved? The graves are opened, the veil of the Temple is burst, all nature trembles; and art thou alone insensible, and dost thou consent to repeat this dismal scene? Ah, flow fast, my tears, break forth, my heart, in bitter sighs, that I may worthily weep for the sorrows of my Saviour! O Jesus, may I die before I cease to have a horror of sin! God liveth, in whose sight I stand; for while there is breath in me, and the spirit of life in my nostrils, my lips shall not give utterance, nor my heart consent to iniquity." [1]

Again, the youthful or chivalrous mind is sincere, and the contrary disposition is fatal to every quality of the spiritual life. St. Ludovico di Gonzaga was so frank and true that no one ever suspected for an instant that he could be guilty of dissimulation.

[1] Exercitia Spiritualia, dies II, meditat I, 73.

This patron of all pious youth used to say, that artifice and disguise were not more destructive of the social commerce of men than of the simplicity of religion. St. Thomas Aquinas even speaks of insincerity in prayer, which he calls a tempting of God; when men pray for direction, and all the while are resolved not to abandon their former opinions and ancient habits; like those of whom the poet says,

> Whose only care, might truth presume to speak,
> Was not to find what they profess'd to seek.

This sincerity of the chivalrous character, which prompts men like St. Francis of Sales to abhor all political debates and counsels, and even which inspires them with an utter aversion for all the maxims of worldly wisdom, would be an admirable advantage to religion. "For all the estates of Savoy and France, and for the whole empire," said the holy bishop of Geneva, "I would not carry a false paper in my bosom: I belong to the blood of the ancient Gauls. What is on my tongue is precisely what comes from my heart. The prudence of the world and the artifices of the flesh appertain to the children of the world; but the children of God have no double meaning and no dissimulation."

Again, the youthful and chivalrous spirit is susceptive of the utmost love, and never would that love be more from the heart than when God was its object: therefore it was essentially qualified to embrace that pure religion which consists in filial love; in feeling assured, as an ancient father says, how "that God can never be strong against us who for our sake became weak even unto death."

Again, the spirit of reverence and of affectionate devotion belongs to chivalry. How well was this evinced by the first Christians, even in the circumstance which is now so vehemently brought forward

as a ground of accusation against Catholics! for Eunapius, a Pagan writer, says, "The Christians, gathering the heads and bones of such as the magistrates had executed, made them their gods, prostrated before them, and thought themselves purer by being defiled at their tombs." It was well, according to this spirit, to seize every mode of evincing reverence for what appertained to God, to honour the relics of saints' bodies, in which the Holy Ghost did vouchsafe to dwell. "We do believe," says St. Augustin, "that the bodies of saints, and especially the relics of blessed martyrs, are to be honoured as if the members of Christ. If any one should teach the contrary, he is not a Christian, but an Eunomian and Vigilantian."[1] Have we not the example of Moses, who used great reverence to the bones of Joseph the patriarch?[2] Of Josias, who treated those of another prophet with the same respect?[3] Were not miracles wrought by the bones of Eliseus,[4] by the shadow of St. Peter, and by the napkin of St. Paul? The same spirit would prompt men to take delight in all those pious customs which were practised by the faithful in the house of peace; to kiss the ground at the reading of their Saviour's agony; to adore the cross with humble reverence; to be the first at the offering of ointment and incense, the last that would observe a cold and insensible demeanour while others were prostrate. The advice of St. Francis to his brethren, always to pick up written paper and place it in a clean place, lest the sacred name of our Lord should be upon it, was symbolical of this reverential spirit. We meet with instances of it even in the most ensanguined page of profane history. Before the battle of Bouvines, Philip Augustus endeavoured

[1] De Eccles. Dogm. c. 73.
[2] Exod. XIII.
[3] Reg. IV. 23.
[4] Ibid.

to persuade Otho, who was excommunicated, to put off the battle till the next day, to avoid the sacrilege of fighting on a Sunday.[1] Chivalry, essentially devout, loves the Church and whatever relates to our Lord's service; it resembles the spirit of the faithful in the primitive times, when men had need of being dismissed with the "Ite missa est." Friedrich Schlegel might have appealed to its profound sense of the sublime, arising from the harmony of its interior, and the fervour of its heart, as well as to the feelings of every man who can appreciate the high dignity and noble strength of the Roman language, whether it is possible for words to be found more harmonious and majestic than those which are used by the Church in the Vulgate translation of the Psalms. "I am almost tempted to doubt," adds this great scholar, "whether the whole circle of Roman literature can shew a single imitation of Greek poetry so eminently happy as this version of the sacred songs of the Hebrews, wherein the utmost elevation of sentiment is throughout accompanied with the most chastened simplicity of style."[2] As long as men were in the most noble quest of chivalry, they were charged "to hear mass daily, and they may do it; and that they take upon them to forsake sin."[3] Men were even reminded that all the faithful, after being washed in the healing waters, are called priests, but especially the just, who have the Spirit of God, and are made living members of Jesus Christ; for these, by faith which is kindled by charity, immolate on the altars of their mind spiritual hosts to God.[4]

They had read in "The Festival," which was the devotional book of the English laity before the change of religion, "that of those who go to mass,

[1] Vies des grands Capitaines Français du Moyen Age, I, 80.
[2] Hist. of Literature. [3] Morte d'Arthur, II.
[4] Catechism. Concil. Trident. pars II, XLV.

every step thitherward and homeward an angel shall reckon." The spirit of chivalry was contrary to that disposition which St. Augustin describes, where he speaks of errors which induced men to say, "It is enough for me to worship God in my conscience. What need have I of going into a church, or of associating visibly with Christians?"[1] I say that these errors argued the prevalence of sentiments which were contrary to the spirit of chivalry or of youth: for it is the characteristic of this spirit to shrink from that pagan state of isolated dignity, to which some of the old philosophers, and many of the moderns have aspired, and to feel the necessity of cherishing bonds of attachment with numbers of men, with whom it may be possible to entertain a sympathy, so as to experience hopes and fears in common with them. The sense of a vacuum and of a desertion, where such a connexion does not exist, is intolerable to minds of this class. They find themselves impelled to look around for some great bond of fellowship, which may embrace all who love order and freedom, and light and justice; all men of every climate, and language, and people. M. de Haller, in the preface to his fourth volume of the Restoration of Political Science, makes use of a similar remark, in order to explain the secret ground of those associations which were formed in Europe, after the progress of the new opinions had dissolved the religious unity, and had introduced interminable discord and party feuds into what had before been the great common country of all Christians. He shews with admirable force that the Catholic Church alone possesses all those perfections, which the ardent but misguided zeal of the modern youth has vainly sought to find in their numberless secret associations: for the Church was a society in

[1] St. August. Serm. XXXVII, § 9.

which not only all the wants of each man's own heart were fulfilled, but where alone all the principles which they so much desired to behold in action, of political justice and of the highest legislative wisdom, were realised and maintained in exercise.[1] Here was a most glorious company, answering to ideal grandeur. Let one try to imagine anything which surpasses a multitude of its separate members taken singly—men like St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bernard, or Fénelon, who possessed the utmost virtue, sanctity, learning and nobility,—and it will be found to be impossible. Here was a society which possessed all that the heart of man can wish upon earth. Is it truth? Where can that be found if not in the Catholic Church, which was able to satisfy the genius of a St. Augustin? Is it happiness? Here it has been found by millions who had vainly sought for it in all ways, in glory, in science, in pleasures, in friendships, in the world, in solitude; here they found that peace which surpasses all understanding, that joy which flows from the blissful regions where God is present for evermore. Is it learning and philosophy? Profane literature can produce nothing comparable to the treasures which have been granted to the Church. Is it nobility and grandeur? All that is illustrious in the annals of heroic fame has been foremost to pay her homage. Is it poverty and holy seclusion? It is in the Church that poverty and seclusion have been sanctified and practised by innumerable saints. Is it a separation from the profane and degraded world? Here was a heavenly fellowship, often, as in pagan times, declared unlawful by states and rulers, who would give no other explanation of their enmity, but by saying "non licet esse vos," and always more or less persecuted by men of sensual

[1] Restauration der Staatswissenschaft, IV, 14.

lives; a blessed union of innocence and sanctity, of loveliness and grandeur, of all that pleases God, and of all that captivates man, which no wrath of princes, no wars of rival nations, no contending interests of political parties, could for an instant interrupt. It was found in every place and in all times! it was holy, universal, eternal: it maintained a unity of doctrine and faith, which nothing could alter or modify, neither the lapse of ages, neither science nor ignorance, neither diversity of languages nor of natural character; from Chili to Greenland, and from Kamchatka to Naples, it was the same society as had existed at Jerusalem, and at Memphis, and at Rome, in the time of Nero. Here were mysterious rites which could be understood only by the initiated; for "sancta sanctis" were the words addressed to strangers. Whenever the divine mysteries were celebrated, whoever belonged to this holy fellowship was invited, at the giving of the peace, to interchange this holy kiss, at least in spirit, with his brethren. Unlike the mind of the moderns, the spirit of chivalry, when submitted to the influence of the faith, could practically demonstrate the error of Celsus, when he said that "a man must be deficient in understanding who could believe that Greeks and barbarians, in Asia, and Europe, and Africa, might be united all in one religion."[1] It was even a disposition absolutely required by chivalry, to seek a union and fellowship with the generous and heroic men of every country. How prepared was such a mind for the spirit of Catholic religion! The moderns, it is true, seem to feel that their only point of union is in the theatres and saloons of the different great cities of Europe; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that they should be always eager to hail the tidings of

[1] Orig. cont. Cels. V, 438.

some new breaking out of national animosities, affording an occasion to practise all the worldly maxims, and to exercise all the cruel passions which have been, at least secretly, fostered in their assemblies, and which have burnt and consumed the very vitals of the spiritual life, under the surface of polished manners and ceremonious courtesy. But wherever this philosophy has not extended, men must have regard to Religion, when she points out her temples as containing the true centre for all hearts; and it will not be in the power of men to hate and despise the people of other countries, with whom they have often knelt in adoration, as members of the great Catholic family, before the altar of God, the pavement of whose churches has often received their falling tears, multitudes for whom, and with whom, they have repeatedly prayed, perhaps discharged angelical offices, and to the efficacy of whose suffrage, (for no prayer is available farther than it is in union with the worship of the Church,) they know that the success of their own devotion is in part to be ascribed. The necessity of such an union has been sufficiently shown by holy men.

"Behold," says St. Augustin, "how the soul operates in the body; it sees with the eyes, it hears with the ears, it smells through the nostrils, it speaks with the tongue, it works with the hands, it walks with the feet, it gives life to all the members and offices of each. The eye does not hear nor the ear see, yet both live; and with various offices there is a common life. Sic est ecclesia Dei. In some saints the Holy Ghost works miracles, in others it speaks truth, in others it preserves virginity, in others conjugal modesty, in others this, in others that; each has its office, each lives: so that what the soul is to the body, the Holy Ghost is to the body of Christ, that is, the Church. But mark

what you have to heed well: if a member be cut off from the body, does the soul follow the part cut off? While attached to the body it had life, when cut off it is dead. Sic et homo Christianus Catholicus est, dum in corpore vivit; præcisus hæreticus factus est, membrum amputatum non sequitur spiritus. Si ergo vultis vivere de Spiritu Sancto, tenete caritatem, amate veritatem, desiderate unitatem, ut perveniatis ad æternitatem."[1]

Essentially generous and benevolent, this spirit would have felt the need and sufficiency of divine charity to lighten every burden, to soften every violence, to excite to all virtues, to teach all wisdom. It would be sensible that without this all things must be vexatious, difficult, and insupportable.[2] The words of St. Augustin might have been the motto of the high orders which were to exhibit the perfection of knighthood—"Amor meus, pondus meum; illo feror, quocunque feror." To this disposition nothing can be too minute, nothing indifferent; and holy men have said that "solicitude about the least things is not the characteristic of novices, but of the most perfect saints; not of a shadowy and fantastic virtue, but of one substantial and solid, and even most approved."[3] The spirit of chivalry is infinitely removed from that incessant susceptibility of offence, that fear of scandals, which, proceeding from a want of perfect faith, and allied to the spirit of ridicule, is now a prevailing passion of the age. Equally free is it from all base suspicion, and distrust of virtue, and rash judgment: therefore it would be peculiarly favourable to the reception of divine instruction. "As the countenances of men are different," says St. Bonaventura, "so also are the modes of living and of advancing in

[1] Serm. 267. [2] Euseb. Nieremberg, Doct. Ascet. I, II, 8.
[3] Nieremberg, Doct. Ascet. III, v, 47.

virtue; and therefore, when you perceive that you distinguish yourself by laudable actions, and that others are negligent, you ought to suppose that although these things are manifest, yet notwithstanding they labour in secret, or at least are employed in some delicate works in the retirement of their heart. And because God especially loves them from the holiness of their heart, perchance it is not his will that they should be oppressed with exterior toils, lest they might not be able to endure both internal and external labours;"[1] "for there are many outwardly most honest who make but little advance within; and there are many of free and loose demeanour who are in heart most holy, and most beloved of God."[2] Oh, how far was such a spirit from a disposition to credit any charge against the Church! St. Augustin says, in allusion to this, that "men ought hardly to believe their own eyes, though they should see words which seemed to yield a blasphemous sound, but that they should read the passage again and again to discover the true meaning; and," he adds, "if you cannot by your own learning give them a good sense, seek some learned and holy man that may instruct thee. Such a man cannot be found with ease? seek him then with labour. He is not to be met with in thy own country? what better motive canst thou have to travel? No such man can be found on the continent? then sail beyond the seas: if thou canst not find any one near the sea, pass further into the country, and even into those parts where the things happened of which these books speak."[3] The spirit of chivalry would prompt men to use such diligence before they should fasten any imputation upon the Church; and even reason, which prompted the

[1] Stim. Divin. Amor. pars III, c. IX. [2] Id.
[3] De Utilitate Credendi, 7.

ancient philosopher to say, that he who listens to calumny is as criminal as he who calumniates, must agree to the justice of that sentence of St. Cyprian, that "whosoever giveth credit unto those who slander the Church, (the Church, of which, as St. Augustin says, the prophets speak less obscurely than even of Christ,[1] that they might be without excuse who should take part against her; the Church, to which the most holy and illustrious men that ever graced the intellectual world have bowed in reverent subjection;) shall share with the slanderers in their sentence at Christ's coming to judge the world."[2]

Again, the spirit of chivalry is active and heroic: and in this also it is admirably prepared to receive the injunctions of religion. "To stand is to go back," says Nieremberg. "Non progredi, regredi est. On Jacob's ladder no angel was seen to stand still, but all were in motion, ascending to God by meditation, or descending to men in charity. Semper procedere debemus, ne ruamus."[3]

Was it not an heroic and chivalrous spirit in St. Francis which so astonished the Mohammedan sultan that he spared his life, and even proceeded to treat him with the greatest respect, confessing frankly that none of his priests would venture their lives, as he had proposed, for their religion? The result of the union of chivalrous qualities is docility, and the love of truth and goodness. Even the great master of ancient philosophy declared that he was never disappointed in his hopes when he directed his lessons to the young: εὖ γὰρ οἶδ' ὅτι ὅπῃ ἂν ἔλθω, λέγοντος ἐμοῦ ἀκροάσονται οἱ νέοι ὥσπερ ἐνθάδε.[4] The spirit of chivalry belongs to the two classes of men who St. Augustin says are laudable in a religious sense; those who have found truth, and who are,

[1] In Psal. XXX, 2.
[2] Lib. I, Epist. 3.
[3] Doct. Ascet. III, VII, 58
[4] Plato, Apolog.

therefore, to be judged most blessed; and those who studiously and rightly inquire after it: the first being in possession; the latter on the way, which, however, is most certain of leading to a successful issue. The same spirit is essentially opposed to the three other kinds of men, whom he pronounces to be detestable: those who are of opinion that they know what they really are ignorant of; those who perceive in truth that they are ignorant, but who do not seek in such a manner that they can find; and lastly, those who neither think that they know, nor wish to inquire.[1] On every account, therefore, the spirit of chivalry was highly favourable to the reception of, and calculated to facilitate the labours of, the holy priesthood, whose motto, like that of the Dominican order, might be said to be, "Laudare, benedicere, et prædicare." Accordingly, in the lives of the saints, and in all books which describe the piety of youth, there is nothing more constant than the testimony which is produced to shew the reverence and love of young persons for all priests and men invested with a holy habit. The generous and chivalrous spirit of nature longs for spiritual instruction, and most ardently admires and loves the sanctity of the men who impart it. Truly grateful to the youthful chorus are those sacred hymns which are used in honour of Apostles and Confessors; as when they sing,

Exultet cœlum laudibus
Resultet terra gaudiis:

and,

Iste Confessor Domini sacratus.

Oh! with what reverence and perfect affection does it regard the holy priests, who announce the great mysteries of the Catholic faith, and who, notwithstanding their sweet simplicity in condescending to

[1] De Utilitate Credendi.

all, boldly denounce the judgments of God upon the rich and impenitent, while their souls seem to dissolve in tenderness for the poor humble members of Jesus Christ! These are the men who are dear to the youthful and knightly heart; those professing it watch their countenances, and find it is a comfort in solitude to repeat their words, and imitate their movements and action in delivery: it is their pride in public to shew them every mark of honour; were it not for fear of singularity and of giving offence, they would kiss the ground on which they trod; in their presence they would spend their most joyous moments of recreation, and it is in their arms that they would wish to die. During one of the most stormy periods of the French revolution, when all the priests of the department of the Seine and Oise were arrested, pressed together upon waggons, and conducted to Versailles, where they were left without means of subsistence, it was the young who came forward, as the ministers of Providence, to relieve their distress. Innumerable young persons were seen hastening to console them, loudly demanding the deliverance of those who had instructed them, who had prepared them for their first communion, who were the guides and friends of their youth. Those who had no money brought their bread to share with them; a young maiden cut off her beautiful hair, and hastened to the prison with the sum which she had obtained for it. Pierre d'Aubusson was a young warrior, assisting at the brilliant festivities which took place at Nancy, in 1445, on occasion of the marriage of Marguerite d'Anjou and of Henry VI, king of England. Charles VII of France had said of him, "I have never seen united so much fire and so much wisdom." Hearing the dismal recital of the manner in which a holy legate of the pope had been burned alive by the Turks, his soul was oppressed with such horror,

that he instantly resolved to forsake his country, his parents, and his hopes of fortune, to hasten to Rhodes, to be invested with the habit of a simple knight of St. John.[1] The Duke of Gandia, in his instructions to his son, the Marquis of Lombay, after charging him to govern his vassals with gentleness and justice, and to obey in all things the law of God, and to consider it as his highest honour to be devout and compassionate, concluded with these words: "I require you also to favour, to the utmost of your power, the Dominican monks of Lombay, and the fathers of the company at Gandia. Remember that these are the foundations of your ancestors, and that you will render no less service to God in preserving them, than they rendered to him in establishing them. I need not recommend to you the holy nuns of Santa Clara, since you know their merit, having a sister and many aunts among them; and that their prayers defend you, and assist you, and favour your salvation."

St. Francis Borgia received himself more honours from the heroic world, as a holy man, who had renounced everything for Christ, than he would ever have obtained, had he continued in the character of Duke of Gandia, one of the most illustrious grandees of Spain.[2] The emperor would not be covered in his presence; great princes would ride out to meet him at the head of a noble troop of cavaliers, and would dismount as soon as they saw him; and persons of the highest dignity would leave the court to wait upon him in the hospitals of the poor, in which he would choose his lodging. Marsollier, in his Life of St. Francis of Sales, relates a most interesting example of the love of chivalry for holy men. There was at the court of Henry IV, a

[1] Le P. Bouhours, Vie de Pierre d'Aubusson.
[2] Vie de St. François de Borgia, tom. I, 218.

gentleman named Deshaies, whom the king had made governor of Montargis: he was a brave and faithful subject, who loved his king, and who was admitted among the number of his private friends. When St. Francis de Sales came to Paris; the king soon perceived that there was a great attachment between him and Deshaies; so that one day he asked the latter which of the two he loved best, King Henry, or the coadjutor of Geneva, which of these two friendships was dearest to him, and which he would prefer to the other if he were obliged to make a choice. Deshaies, surprised at such a question, replied that the goodness with which his majesty had treated him had not rendered him forgetful that he was his subject, and that his duty as a subject was superior to all other obligations; that he had for him a boundless zeal and fidelity, but that the word friendship was hardly respectful enough for a subject to use in reference to his sovereign, though he confessed that he cherished all those feelings for his majesty which a tender and respectful friendship could inspire. The king replied, that he did not ask about what he owed to him as his sovereign; that he never doubted of his zeal and fidelity; but that it was a question of friendship, in which Henry, and not the king, was concerned, and that he wished him to say sincerely for which of the two he had the greatest friendship; for him, or for the Bishop of Geneva. A courtier would have dissembled, or rather, one who had not the generous soul of chivalry would not have had occasion to dissemble; but Deshaies was a different character, and he would rather have renounced all his fortune than the friendship of the saint; he could not dissemble, and yet he appeared embarrassed. The king, who loved chivalry, was delighted at his confusion, and pressed him, saying, "Deshaies, you must answer my question." At length, Deshaies finding it impossible to

go back, replied in these words, that since his majesty ordered him to tell the truth, he confessed that he felt for him all the veneration and all the tenderness of which he was capable, but also that he dearly loved the Bishop of Geneva. The king was pleased at the generosity of Deshaies, and said, "I have nothing to object to you on this account; but I pray both of you to admit me as a third into your friendship!"

The ancient sages recommended something like the external part of confession—that sublime institution, to which all the noble establishments of Catholic Europe in favour of the poor are to be ascribed.[1] Plutarch, in his dialogue *De Profectu Morum*, recommends the confession of faults. Galen, in his book on the Cure of the Maladies of the Soul, advises men to obey the judgment of some prudent and virtuous counsellor. And Plato, in the third book of his Republic, advises men to apply to others as to their physicians, in order to cure their mental miseries.[2] The holy instructions, and the firm, uncompromising virtue of the clergy, which would have been a source of fear and jealousy to the base part of mankind, would furnish the very secret of securing the respect and love of chivalry. Of this truth religious men were often sensible. Eusebius Nieremberg says, that the holy prelate Andres Oviedo used to repay his hosts who had entertained him on his journeys by giving them a short sermon, teaching them the way of devout life, and exciting them to piety.[3] Holy men knew that the generous part of mankind seeks to be reproved when convicted of offence. With what simplicity and confidence did they discharge this office! Even the profane historian records instances. "Father,"

[1] Rubichon de l'Action du Clergé, p. 94.
[2] Nieremberg, Doct. Ascet. lib. V, IX, 64.
[3] Doct. Ascet. V, III, 18.

says the provost of a certain town, "I have been too severe against the merchants when they came to the fair; my sergeants seized some of their cloth, though, in truth, hardly enough to make one a double collar." "Provost," replies the holy man, "it is by the collar that the fiend will drag you to perdition." "Father," says a citizen, "the lord of the manor is bound to send to their new residence all such persons as change their abode. I have no need of an escort, for the roads are safe; but my lord has put me to unjust expense, and in my turn I wish to involve him in a little." "My friend, the escort which you wish to take will never conduct you to Paradise."[1] Chivalry was sure to respect power which would be employed in the name of Heaven to protect the innocent and to correct the vices of the temporal government,[2] to diminish the sufferings of the lower classes of society, to increase the happiness of the higher, and to maintain the security of all:[3] it was sure to admire grandeur which was possessed with humility and with the Christian spirit; as when the Archbishop of Rouen walked bare-footed to take possession of his cathedral; and when St. Francis de Sales replied to one who objected to his appearing in the carriage of the King of France, that Philip the deacon, at least an apostolic man, did not refuse to sit in the chariot of the queen's minister.

What could be more in harmony with the minds of generous men than the whole character of the Catholic clergy? What can be more revolting to all noble and chivalrous sentiments than the whole system of those who resist the influence of the clergy? Mark how this can be verified even in the most minute detail. Always and everywhere the liberal

[1] Monteil, Hist. des François.
[2] Guizot, Discours sur l'Hist. V, 32.
[3] M. Rubichon de l'Action du Clergé.

arts have flourished in proportion as the clergy have possessed more influence; always and everywhere the liberal arts have been ranged in hostility against the mechanical arts; and it need not be shewn that the spirit of chivalry decides in favour of the liberal arts, "to which Catholic Europe has given the preference, while Protestant Europe has made choice of the mechanical arts." This is the observation of M. Rubichon.[1] It is to the clergy that chivalry was indebted for those sublime paintings and representations of the heroes of religion which were capable of exalting its spirit to such a height of devotion; and it is the sophists and enemies of the clergy who have created that tribe of artisans who cover our ignoble walls with stamped paper, or break the uniformity of coats of varnish with festoons of cotton. It is to the clergy that it must ascribe those numerous schools of painting and music which gave a separate character to almost every great city; it is to the adversaries of the clergy that men are indebted for the formation of that national character which is well expressed by M. Rubichon, where he asks, "what would a modern Englishman say if one were to speak of the School of London or of Bristol, as we say the School of Seville, the School of Valencia, the School of Cordova, or of Madrid? He would suppose, and I say it seriously, that one alluded to a school of pugilism, the only schools that I ever heard of which were not founded and vivified by the religious orders."[2]

Passing to higher considerations, there would be no difficulty in shewing that it would be in accordance with the inmost soul of chivalry to venerate both that sacred state of orders which, as St. Thomas said, requires a previous sanctity from all who enter it, and that holy life of religion which, though not

[1] De l'Action du Clergé, p. 125.

[2] Ibid.

requiring that previous exercise in virtue, was a mode of life instituted to attain sanctity.[1] Even a licentious king, Ethelbald, could respect the admonitions of a Saint Boniface;[2] and men devoted to the labours and sufferings of active life had not the means of accusing those of indolence whom they beheld, like the Franciscan, "labouring with their hands, not for the sake of gain and avarice, but to give good example, and avoid sloth:"[3] or like the great prelates of the Church, devoting themselves to a life of mortification and continued watchfulness. It is not necessary to suppose that it would be only men who had themselves attained to perfect sanctity who would be disposed to acknowledge that of the Catholic clergy; for, as the Athenian in Plato observes, "many men without virtue can determine nevertheless who are really just and who are not; for even to the wicked there is a divine power of distinguishing good from evil men."[4] Much more, therefore, would the generous and noble spirit of chivalry be sensible of the excellence of the priesthood, and anxious to promote its object. The German nobles in 830 presented a memorial to the Emperor at Worms, "praying, with bended knees, that the bishops might not thenceforth be compelled to go with the army, but that they might remain in their diocese, attending to their holy ministry." It would be a filial reverence with which chivalry would be disposed to regard the clergy. St. Boniface, after his first mission to Friesland, travelled to Hesse, and came to the banks of the Mosel, where was a convent of nuns under the government of the Abbess Addula, who received him hospitably. During dinner it was the custom there, as elsewhere, for some one to read aloud out of the Holy Scrip-

[1] II, II, 9, 180, art. 1.
[2] Bibl. Pat. XIII.
[3] Testament. S. Francisci.
[4] Plato de Legibus, XII.

tures. On this occasion the Abbess selected Gregory, her grandson, to read, who was then fifteen years of age. After Boniface had given him his blessing, the lad read out of the Latin Bible; St. Boniface was struck with the spirit of the boy, and after listening to him for some time, he said, "You read well, my child, if you do but understand what you have read." The boy, who did not rightly comprehend the sense of St. Boniface, replied that he knew well what he had read. "Very well, then," replied Boniface, "now tell me how you understand it." The boy was going to read it over again, but Boniface stopped him: "Nay, my son, I do not mean that; I know very well that you can read, but you must express what you have read to me in your own language." The boy was abashed, and unable to proceed before the whole company, and said he could not. "Shall I then tell you what it means?" asked St. Boniface. The boy begged that he would; then St. Boniface read the passage in German, and preached upon it before the whole company: "and," says Liudger, who was the scholar of Abbat Gregory, "his words sank so deeply and rapidly into the heart of Gregory, that he forgot parents and father-land, and immediately went to his grandmother and said to her, 'With this man I must go and learn to understand the Holy Scriptures.' The Abbess at first sought to keep him back, but much water cannot extinguish love; Gregory replied, 'If you will not give me a horse to ride with him, I will go with him on foot.' When the Abbess saw how high was the heart of the youth, she gave him a horse and a boy, and let him depart with St. Boniface. There seems to me," says Liudger, "to have been the same spirit in this young man which inflamed the Apostles, when at the word of our Lord they left their nets and their fathers to follow him." Gregory followed St. Boni-

face through all his dangers, and became his most faithful disciple: he laboured as a missionary in Friesland, and collected disciples out of France, England, Friesland, Saxony, Suabia, and Bavaria. When he came to die, he ordered his scholars to carry him into the church, and place him before the altar, and then, after praying, and receiving the holy communion, still looking to the altar, he departed to our Lord.

These passages and reflections are sufficient to shew how necessary it will be in the following review of the heroic age of Christianity to dwell at some length upon the holy order of priesthood, which exercised so great an influence upon the spirit and institutions of chivalry.

In these days, when monasteries are described as the monuments of superstition, and governments are obliged to build prisons, which enclose as much space as a village would occupy, giving rise to a new order of architecture, we hear a great deal of the evils resulting from subjection to the priesthood. The baseness of such a subjection, the indignity of recognising its authority, form the favourite theme of the proud sensualists, who employ their thoughts upon inventing new sources of pleasure and profit for themselves, and new modes of punishment for the poor. The fact, however, is, and that I may express it without being tedious, and, as Socrates would say, that I may speak after the manner of geometricians, in proportion as men revere persons of this blessed order, we may conclude that they have advanced in virtue. The degree of reverence which is evinced for the priesthood is the most faithful criterion to determine how far any age or nation has been endued with goodness and sanctity. With what profound humility does it become ordinary men to make mention of so high and mysterious an institution! Our Lord himself was the

first priest in the time of grace, typically foreshadowed by Melchisedeck. Oh, how reverently do the ancient fathers speak of priesthood! Nazianzen termeth a priest a mediator between God and man. St. Chrysostom says, "neither angel, nor archangel, nor any created power, but only our Advocate and Comforter did institute this order of priesthood." St. Ambrose says, "man doth impose the hand, but God giveth the grace." And Pacianus says, "how can that society or company of men receive the Holy Ghost, if the anointed priest doth not sign and bless them?"

Moreover, all the perfections of sanctity must be in a peculiar manner objects of admiration to the spirit of chivalry, even in its lowest and most disordered state. When the adverse spirit invaded Saul, it was the harp of David which could appease his madness. What was signified by Saul, says St. Gregory, but the elevation of the powerful? and what did David represent but the humble life of the saints?[1]

St. Hilarion, when he was 18 years of age, being in his hovel in the forest, a band of desperate youths resolved to fall upon him one night, either thinking he had something which they might rob him of, or else judging it an affront that a young man should live in the midst of them so securely, without any fear. They wandered all the night seeking his poor cot, and could by no means find it. In the morning they found him, and in a jeering manner said to him, "What wouldst thou do, if thou shouldest see thyself compassed about with thieves?" And he answered them, "The poor and naked fear no thieves." And they said to him, "At least, thou canst lose thy life." He answered them, "'Tis true, I can lose it; but I fear not thieves, because

[1] De Cura Pastorali, III, 2.

I am prepared to die." His innocence and constancy overcame them, and awakened them to a sense of their own wickedness. They confessed that they had sought him that night, without being able to find him, and, with a flood of tears, promised to amend their lives.[1]

Lastly, we may observe, that, true to the original constitution of nature, this spirit was predisposed to regard authority as its guide, rather than private speculation and judgment; hence it was prepared for catholicism, which would differ from heresy, as the old man told Francis Walsingham, chiefly in this, that it would lead men to embrace traditum non inventum, according to the expression of Tertullian, that which would be delivered by just authority and not invented by himself;[2] it would be prepared for having recourse to the Church, in which the Apostles, as St. Irenæus says, "have placed all things that belong unto the truth of Christian religion, that every man who would, might take from thence the drink of life; so that whatsoever the Church delivereth we must love with great diligence, and receive from her the traditions of truth";[3] for, as St. Augustin says, "neque in confusione paganorum, neque in purgamentis hæreticorum, neque in languore schismaticorum, neque in cæcitate Judæorum quærenda est religio, sed apud eos solos, qui Christiani catholici vel orthodoxi nominantur, id est, integritatis custodes, et recta sectantes,"[4] not with those who invent and change, who propose and modify, who select and adjust, or who teach that men may change and modify, select and adjust, but with those who hold fast, who guard and follow what was once delivered.

[1] Lives of the Saints, by Ribadeneira.
[2] Search into Matters of Religion, p. 475.
[3] Advers. Hæres. I, 46. [4] Liber de Vera Religione, 6.

Herein the spirit of chivalry was seen in harmony with the wisdom and simplicity of nature, which ordains that man should be indebted for all essential knowledge to authority, rather than to his own private speculation and judgment. The man who relies upon the authority of the Catholic Church, besides the merit of obedience to the ordination of Christ, deserveth also the praise of highest wisdom; for to prefer the judgment of so great a number of learned, holy, and virtuous men as have been in that Church from age to age, before his own private judgment, is most evident wisdom, even considered according to the principles of human wisdom. This is the observation of Francis Walsingham, after concluding his search into matters of religion.[1] No intelligent person will require to be shewn how these and similar considerations are connected with the subject on which we are engaged. In the ages which we shall shortly review, it was the unity of faith, resulting from these principles, which united all hearts in noble and generous chivalry.

"Europe," says Schlegel, "was united in one during these grand ages, and the soil of this general country was fruitful in generous thoughts, which served to guide both in life and death. One common chivalry converted adversaries into brethren in arms, and it was to defend one common faith that they were armed. Love inspired every heart, and the poetry which sang this alliance expressed the same sentiment in different languages. Alas! the noble energy of the ancient time is lost. Our age is the inventor of a narrow policy: and what weak men are unable to conceive, is in their eyes only a chimera. Nothing that is divine can succeed when it is undertaken with a profane heart. Alas! our

[1] P. 476.

age has knowledge of neither faith nor love; how could it have preserved hope?"

"This know also," says the Apostle, "that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves." That these times were accomplishing in our heroic age, it was impossible to suppose; but a new period of the world's history has commenced, and new principles are said to be necessary. The ancient orders of Christendom are superseded by clubs and associations, whereby men can enjoy some of the pleasures of society, without fulfilling the duties attached to social life, and may escape the burden of personal obligation, without forfeiting their rights and honour. That love which was the soul of chivalry, that devoted affection of the youthful heart, in conformity with nature's law, which expelled every selfish thought and wish, and refined and developed every generous virtue, is exposed to the counteracting influence of the new philosophy, which teaches the young that there may be happiness without the exercise of virtue, without being devoted and faithful, disinterested and sincere; which places avarice and ambition (for the consideration of wealth is avarice, and the love of rank and high connexion is ambition,) in the innermost sanctuary of the human heart, and thus defiles, in its noblest feature, the image of the Almighty; which leads its disciples to regard all duty and obligation, "which grey-beards call divine," as matters in which he has no concern, and to say to his selfish heart, like Richard,

I am myself alone.

The convenience and profit of individuals, not the everlasting distinctions of right and wrong, are consulted and regarded as the only public good; riches and presumption overpower the opposite scale of virtue and modesty. In a word, the prin-

ciples and thoughts of men have changed with their political situation. What was once honourable is now said to be obsolete and worthless, imaginary, eccentric, and ridiculous; what was once baseness and crime is now prudence, and moderation, and philosophy. The question will, therefore, again present itself to every lover of his species, to every thoughtful observer who casts a philosophic eye upon the character, and transactions, and interests of mankind, and to him it will, indeed, be a subject of serious inquiry, how far this new direction, which has been given to the movement of the human heart, how far the principles and temper, which now influence the actions of men, may fulfil the prediction of Holy Scripture.

XVI. In concluding this introductory view of the spirit of the Christian chivalry, it will be necessary to add some remarks on the symbolical character which unquestionably belongs to it; which consideration will shew with what perfect consistency men may associate it with such grave reflections as are occasionally to be met with in these books, and into what error we should be led if we were to guide our judgment by the advice of men like Boileau, who maintained, in his Art of Poetry, that religion ought to be separated from literature, as it had already been from the theory and practice of civil government. "There are many things between heaven and earth which are not dreamt of in such a philosophy," as Friedrich Schlegel says, in allusion to the celebrated lines of Shakspeare.[1] It is by a reference to this symbolical philosophy, that we should understand that sentence of Plato, where he says, that the rule of moral excellence lies between what does not exist, and what is abstract truth.[2]

Modern critics tear to pieces the magnificent

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, I. [2] Plato de Repub. V, 479.

figures of chivalrous history, and then presenting isolated fragments, they condemn them as extravagant and ridiculous; but they should observe, that it is only when connected and associated with the ideas which gave life and movement to chivalry, that the images which belonged to it can be understood. In order to explain this, we are again directed to the youthful mind as a mirror, in which we can more easily behold the leading features of chivalry than if we were to contemplate it in a more abstract form.

"It is easy to shew," says Friedrich Schlegel, "that the education of youth, whether domestic or public, is essentially symbolic, and must be so, unless it should degenerate into a mere mechanical system. Herein consists, in a great measure, the difference between a spiritless education, which, however reproachless in point of moral strength, must still prove dead and unfruitful, and another more pure and suitable to human nature, less ostentatious in the beginning, but, on that account, more productive in the end. How susceptible the youthful mind is for whatever is symbolical within its sphere, and with what liveliness it seizes upon it, will sufficiently appear from observing one of the most common sports for the different ages of boyhood and youth, in which the employments, conditions, and situations of real life, which are for them still in futurity, are imitated in various childlike ways, or rather emblematically represented, and it is known to all how much motion this extends through the little community; what multitudinous and deep impressions it leaves in their minds, more, perhaps, than many hours of study, when the end of this study is prevented by the usual method of overloading."[1] Nor is this observation to be con-

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, 368.

fined to youth. It is true, in the White King and other books of chivalry, we only read that Maximilian, and Du Guesclin, and others, practised these diversions in their early days; but where there is genius, maturer age seems to be oftener deterred from engaging in them by external considerations, than induced to abandon them through an inward experience of their inefficacy to delight the mind.

When Lælius and Scipio would go into the country, they used to become quite like boys again, escaping from the city as if from confinement. Cicero says, "I hardly dare to relate of such men what Scævola used to affirm, that they used to amuse themselves picking up shells and pebbles, and descending to every kind of play and relaxation."[1]

To the youthful inclinations described by Schlegel, might be added that disposition which so remarkably characterises young persons of piety, who, like the young Duke of Gandia (St. Francis Borgia), St. Francis de Sales, and numberless others, find no play or amusement so captivating as that in which they imitate the ceremonies of the Church, building little oratories and cloisters, decorating little altars, and training children of their own age to assist them in their innocent solemnities.[2] Even in a later age of youth, St. Francis Borgia is described as sanctifying, by means of this symbolical view, the adventures of the chase, to which he was continually obliged to accompany the emperor.

This want and demand of nature may yield us an insight into the whole history of whatever is connected with the embellishment or harmony of human life. The remark of Friedrich Schlegel may be applied to all the images which belong to chivalry. His words are these: "The reality, the actual form,

[1] De Oratore, II, 6.

[2] Vie de St. François de Borgia, tom. I, p. 9. Vie de St. François de Sales, par Marsollier, I, 10. Souvenirs de S. Acheul.

and the thousand imitations or copies, are never the proper and immediate object of the arts of statuary and painting. The beauty of form is, at least, not their sole and exclusive end, but only conditionally, and with reference to other given relations of character. Painting, while it unfolds so wonderful a variety of riches to the eye, is for the mind intellectual and symbolic: some thought, some idea of opposition or form, is always as the inward sense and the inward guide which directs the hand of the artist, and from which the art itself proceeds; or, in other words, all art is symbolical: and certainly this holds not merely in those arts of figuring, but also in all other of the higher arts. The medium of their representation may indeed be the form, as in statuary and painting; or the tone, as in music; or the word, as in poetry; and even herein lies the distinction which separates the higher art from another apparently related to it, but which has an outward and practical object, whose spirit and usage cannot be merely symbolical, as in the instance of rhetoric in its relation with poetry."[1] Nor is this all. "The Christian state is symbolical and historically holy; while the bare natural state is either unholy and false when formed on the principle of rationalism, or else it is absolute tyranny. There are three powers in human life and in human society, which have a symbolical meaning, and a character of sanctity, and which rest upon a divine foundation,—the paternal authority, the spiritual or priestly, and the kingly or highest civil power. The loving care of the earthly father has an analogy to, and is a kind of representation of that of the Eternal Father; and the respect and obedience due to him, founded upon nature, and sanctioned by revelation, are found, more or less, in all ages and nations.

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, 362.

The spiritual or priestly power, as dispensing the divine grace of him who came to save the world, is in the highest degree holy; the judicial or regal power derives a sanctity from its functions of justice and its author. All these three holy powers have a kind of analogy and inward relationship amongst each other; the father speaks of rule, the ruler of paternal care, while both these are encompassed, as it were, by the spiritual power, holy and venerable, to guide and moderate them. In a word, upon nature, upon divine revelation, and upon historical justice, these three holy powers are grounded—the good and loving father, the pious priest, and the just king."[1] Deprive men of the symbolic sense, by training them to confine all their observation to the mere material form, and you prepare them for being strangers and even enemies to every institution belonging to a Christian state. Everything that constitutes its happiness and real glory will be denounced by them as unjust, ridiculous, or incomprehensible. But we must ascend still higher. "Religion itself doth sometimes delight in veils and shadows, so that whoso exempts them, seems in a manner to interdict all commerce between things divine and human." This is what Lord Bacon says.[2] There is no way that I can conceive more worthy to illustrate this position than by appealing to the judgment of those who have had the happiness of spending the holy week in a Catholic city, when the Church, by her affecting symbols, displays the divine power of being able to spiritualise and elevate the souls of multitudes to a state of communion with the glorified choirs of heaven.[3] Behold those veiled sanctuaries, those stripped altars, those deserted tabernacles! behold that immense crowd of faithful

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, 384–8.
[2] On the Wisdom of the Ancients.
[3] Vide S. Dionysii Areopag. de Ecclesia Hierarch.

Christians, who, from morning till night, fill the temples of God, evincing all the sorrow and agony of worthy disciples of the crucified Jesus, falling prostrate to kiss the dust, or, one by one, timidly mounting the ungarnished steps to kiss the naked spot where the precious body of their Saviour used to be daily offered; rich and poor pressing with ardour to adore his cross; some, perhaps, breathing their last as their lips approach the image of his feet! Behold that long procession of devout men, chanting the solemn litany; those angelic children, devoted to the service of God, bearing the lights and incense! Behold on the last vigil the opening of the great festival of joy, the lighting of the paschal candle, while the deacon sings, "O vere beata nox, in qua terrenis cœlestia, humanis divina junguntur! Oramus ergo te, Domine, ut cereus iste, in honorem tui nominis consecratus, ad noctis hujus caliginem destruendam, indeficiens perseveret, et in odorem suavitatis acceptus, supernis luminaribus misceatur. Flammas igitur Lucifer matutinus inveniat. Ille, inquam, Lucifer qui nescit occasum. Ille qui regressus ab inferis humano generi serenus illuxit." The unhappy children who have wanted the instruction of our common mother, and who cannot understand the symbolic meaning of these signs, turn away in wonder or indifference; but they who have been taught to perceive it, withdraw in silence in the unutterable thankfulness of the heart, some to renounce the world, others to pray for death, or to devote their remaining years to the service of their fellow-men, in order to give glory to God. Oh, what explanation can be given of symbols, if men have not souls to feel and admire these?

With respect to the general discipline of the Church, which gave rise to the characteristics of the Christian chivalry which I am about to describe, it may be well to anticipate what we shall hereafter have frequent occasion to discourse upon, by a few

sentences from the ancient wise. "It would indeed be grievous and calamitous beyond all expression," says St. John of Damascus, in defining what he speaks of as the ancient discipline of Christians, "if the Church, bright with so many privileges, and adorned with the graces of so many holy men who are gone before, should be turned back to beggarly elements, so as to tremble with fear where there is no cause for fear; as if, ignorant of the true God, it should dread a relapse to the worship of idols."[1] "The apostles beheld our Lord with their bodily eyes, others beheld the apostles, others beheld the martyrs. I also desire to behold with my eyes as well as mentally, whence I can have a remedy against evil. For I have a two-fold nature, and what I behold I venerate, not as God, but as the revered image of what is to be revered. But you, perhaps, are more sublime and more removed from matter, and, being above the body, you despise all that is subjected to the eyes; but since I am a man, and clothed with a body, I desire to converse in body with those who are holy, and to behold them with my eyes."[2] "These images are books for those who cannot read. When I have no books, and have no leisure for reading, moved by my thoughts I go into the church, the common infirmary for souls. There the flowers of painting attract my eyes, and delight me like the view of a meadow, and they set before my mind the glory of God. I reflect on the constancy of the martyr, and the reward of the crowned. Falling down on the earth, I adore God in his martyr, and I receive the hope of salvation."[3] Does not St. Chrysostom say: "He who pays honour to a martyr, does it to God, to whom the martyr bore testimony; he who reverently salutes an apostle of Christ, reverently salutes Christ who sent him;

[1] Orat. I, 2, de Imaginibus. [2] Id. [3] Id.

and he who falls down to shew his veneration for the mother of Christ, without doubt he offers that honour to the Son. Yes, all things which are thine, O Lord, we adore, we shew reverence to, we embrace with love,—thy divinity, power, and goodness, thy mercy to us, thy descent and incarnation; and as we fear to touch red-hot iron, not on account of the nature of the iron, but of the fire which is joined with it; so I adore this flesh, not on account of the nature of flesh, but on account of the divinity which is hypostatically incorporated with it; we adore thy passion: who ever saw death adored? We do not adore his corporeal death, but his saving passion. We adore thy image, we adore all things which are thine, thy ministers, thy friends, and, above all, thy mother, who bore God. We make no image of the invisible God; we make no idols of dead men; but after that God, through his ineffable goodness, had assumed flesh, and become visible in flesh on the earth, and walked with men, having taken upon him our nature and bodily grossness, and the figure and colour of flesh, we err not when we express his image from the desire of beholding his form. It is for envious Satan to desire that we should not behold the resemblance of our Lord, and to be filled with jealousy because God bestows honour on his saints."[1]

From the Old Testament no objection can be advanced against the discipline of Christians. God commanded the Ark and the Cherubims to be made, and his servant carved many figures which God commanded not, and was approved; and God said that the power of working in metals and of making fine purple were his gifts; and no men can call these things base and mean, unless they be Manichæans, who designate as vile what God has made and

[1] Joan. Damas. Orat. II, 5.

approved of. Matter may become holy and deserve reverence. "Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place is holy." If this earth became holy, how much more must not the resemblance of our Lord be holy? In this question of images, we must inquire into the mind of those who use them; and if their mind be true and right, and bent on the glory of God and of his saints, then these images assist men to acquire virtue and to avoid vice, and they are subservient to the salvation of souls: and so, as for these images, examples, similitudes, the books and monuments of illiterate men, we venerate them, we kiss them, we embrace them with eyes and lips and with our hearts.[1] "God himself made man in his own image. Adam beheld God, Jacob saw him. It is clear that God suffered himself to be beheld in human form. We know that it is impossible to behold the nature of God, of angel or spirit; and yet we may contemplate it by a certain transformation, Divine Providence attributing forms and figures to incorporeal things, which lead us to a knowledge of that part of them which admits of such connexion, lest we should be altogether ignorant of God and of incorporeal creatures."[2] How uniform are the testimonies from ancient fathers! St. Basil says, "Arise, O excellent painters of great actions, and illustrate the imperfect image of your general with your pencil. The crowned conqueror (that is the martyr Barlaam), whom I have obscurely delineated, should be exhibited by you with colours, and through your painting of the admirable actions of the martyrs, I must depart conquered." St. Gregory of Nyssen says of the picture of Abraham offering up Isaac, "I have often beheld the painted representation of this bitter deed, and I have never

[1] Orat. III, 9.
[2] Id. III, 25. Vide S. Dionysii Areopag. de Divinis Nominibus et de Cœlesti Hierarch.

turned from it without tears; for art enables the eyes to witness the whole history." St. Athanasius says, "We, the faithful, never adore images as gods, like the heathens; God forbid. As an evidence to the contrary, when the figure is obliterated, we burn the wood as useless." Stephen Bostrenus says, in arguing with the Jews, "As for images, all things in the name of God are good and holy; but as for idols, God forbid we should know them. These, indeed are evil, as they who make them; for the image of a holy prophet is one thing, but the statue of Saturn, of Venus, of the sun and moon, is another." To the same effect, and also arguing with Jews, St. Leontius of Cyprus says, "On this account I express and delineate Christ, and the passion of Christ, in churches, in houses, in the market-place, in paintings, and in woven work, and on garments, and in every place, that by a continued consideration we may always keep God in memory; and, as Jacob, when he received Joseph's tunic, stained with blood, after his brethren had sold him, kissed the garment and held it before his eyes, not that he lamented the tunic, but because he fancied that he kissed and embraced Joseph; so we Christians, embracing the image of an apostle or martyr, fancy that in mind we embrace Christ himself or his martyr. How many instances of adoration do you Jews find in your own Scriptures! and yet you are angry when you behold me reverencing the image of Christ, or of his mother, or of some saint, and you call me idolater. Have you no shame? Do you not fear? Do you not blush when you see me demolishing the temples of idols all over the world, and building temples in honour of the martyrs? What and if I do adore the images of the saints? Are they idols? Idols were representations of those who were adulterers, murderers, effeminate, not of prophets and apostles. The Chaldeans, at Babylon, had musical

instruments of all sorts with which they celebrated their divinities. The children of Israel had brought musical instruments from Jerusalem, which they hung up on trees by the waters of Babylon. The instruments were alike; but the one were used to the glory of God, the other to the worship of devils. Such is the difference between the images of the Christians, and the idols of the heathen." But the sum is shortly expressed by another holy man, when he says, "Whatever Christians do is to be tried by their faith." In these later times, a great German philosopher, the illustrious Leibnitz, has devoted part of an immortal work to the defence and praise of this Catholic discipline.[1] Friedrich Schlegel also has left a fine passage on the subject, in his lectures on the Philosophy of Life: "The first and highest destination of man," he observes, "was symbolic, namely, the resemblance of the Divinity; and since the natural wants and desires of man are symbolical, since his present office in the creation, his whole earthly position, his high and divine destiny, are even so, can it appear strange that religion itself, for the most part, should be arrayed in symbolical clothing?"[2] Again, if one could conceive a Christianity without an altar, without any symbolical clothing or mysteries, it would be only a philosophic view and opinion, or, at the most, a school of art, but not a religion; and the study of the Bible itself, if still cultivated under such circumstances, would be no more than a kind of learned passion, like any other remarkable antiquarian inquiry. On the other hand, a community and a religion existing without an altar would certainly not rest upon a philosophic opinion, or a bare learned study, or passion, but solely upon prayer and the spiritual instruction or preaching. But on

[1] System. Theolog. 121. [2] Philosophie des Lebens, 371.

this supposition we must conceive the belief of a generally prevailing immediate inspiration, which would serve as a point of passage to the most fearful fanaticism, of which horror any one may form an idea, who casts an eye upon the history of the Mohammedan people, and of all sects in ancient and modern times.[1] So that, to return to this theory of the arts, and of the universal source whence they spring, "if it were conceivable that, at any time, religion should entirely cease to exist, that not merely its positive model and revelation should be forgotten, but also that in general all faith in the divine, this light of a higher unearthly struggle, could be effaced, that this tone of eternity could be silenced in the sensitive breast of the human race; then immediately would all higher art itself perish and disappear. In our age the case is rather the inverse. During the general prevailing political unbelief, which is a natural consequence of religious unbelief, the whole life, especially the external, being no longer understood and regarded according to its symbolical meaning, and therefore the state and all greatness having lost much of its ancient venerable splendour and of its former sanctity, while the religious sentiment itself, in reality still existing, is more or less dissipated in party contentions, so that scarcely one can find any longer a pure free state of simple pious faith,—by a great number of men of the cultivated class, the arts and the beautiful are regarded as the last remaining emblem of the divine, and as the only palladium of the higher and inward life; what they can never be in any manner when thus isolated. Our age may be compared in this respect, to a formerly rich but now decayed noble house, where the only remnants of ancient grandeur are some pieces of family plate

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, 377.

and honourable heir-looms preserved from better times. In like manner our spent and decayed age has preserved only the outward ornaments of art, whilst the great capital of old faith, to which we owe that ornament and beauty, as well as the many other good fruits, has been long since consumed for the greatest part of men.[1]

The reader will have long since anticipated me in observing the application of these beautiful and profound remarks to the immediate subject of this book. They furnish the clue to guide us through the obscure labyrinth of romantic fiction, and even of history, in the middle ages, and an argument which may succeed in convincing us that there is not only entertainment, but even a high degree of sublime instruction in the works which have, perhaps, been hitherto presented to us as belonging to a department of literature worthy of no other epithets but those of extravagant and unprofitable. The ancients had well seen that "all things are full of enigmas with the poets, as well as with the philosophers"; and Maximus of Tyre, after making this observation, adds, "whose modesty and reverence for truth seems to me more worthy of love than the boldness of the moderns."[2] "Let the poet speak the truth, although he speak poetically, although in a fable and in verse, I will search into the mystery of the fable, nor shall its form lead me astray: ἀληθῆ λεγέτω, κἂν ψιλῶς λέγῃ, I will gladly receive such instructions."[3]

All poetry exists by the aid of metaphor. The poet substitutes sensible images, which have a relation to those powers of the soul which he wishes to awaken for the spiritual object of his conception, in the converse manner in which the geometrician substitutes purely abstract terms and letters, which

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, 373. [2] Dissert. X, 5. [3] Id.

represent nothing definite, for numbers, lines, surfaces, and solids. It has been shewn that the process of the human mind is always the same in all its exercises, and that a poet, in his inventions, follows the same law as guided Napier and Descartes in the invention of logarithms and the geometrical analysis. It is the same with ordinary men in all the customs and employments of life. Comparison, and the substitution of images which have a relation to the subject of thought, constitute the general course of the human mind. The poet represents the abstract by the sensible, the geometrician the sensible by the abstract. In the symbolical style, so peculiarly English, though it is by no means an innovation in the French language, as some of their later critics pretend,[1] for it belongs to the philosophy of Christians, the object is effected by developing only the secondary idea or image which is to represent the ultimate subject of thought; and it has the advantage of being more rapid than comparison, and less obscure than allegory.

Cicero remarks the pleasure with which men hear words that are transferred, that is, which are bent from their direct use to convey another meaning; which he thinks may arise from its being an exercise of genius, or rather from the person who hears the word being led to a different idea without being led wrong, which imparts a great delight.[2] The first fathers of the Christian Church made especial use of this symbolical mode of instruction, and Clemens Alexandrinus extols it as an admirable instrument to minister to wisdom. Philo, a celebrated philosopher among the Platonicians, relates that the Christians who lived in Alexandria used to employ themselves in this holy exercise, and that they seemed to regard the law as having a body and a soul, represented by

[1] Le Globe, VII, 28.

[2] De Oratore, lib. III, 40.

the letter and the spirit. Father Luis of Granada, in the third part of his Catechism; Menestrier, in his Art of Emblems; Maximilian Sanda, in his *Theologia Symbolica;* and Benedict Hoeften, in his book entitled *Schola Cordis,* show the use of emblems in theology, as taken from the Holy Scriptures. The Church, as we have seen, added the sanction of her practice to this exercise; for in her offices men were presented with the most sublime emblems of all the great mysteries of the Christian faith. It was in conformity with these principles, thus recommended and developed, that in the romantic literature of the middle ages, as Schlegel remarks of the Spanish poetry, "religion and fiction, truth and poetry, were not made to stand at variance from each other, but were all united in the most harmonious beauty."[1]

This great philosopher observes, that "Milton, when compared with the Catholic poets, Dante and Tasso, who were his models, laboured under considerable disadvantages, by being entirely denied the use of a great many symbolical representations, histories, and traditions, which were in their hands the most graceful ornaments of Christian poetry. He was sensible of this, and attempted to make amends for the defect by adopting fables and allegories out of the Koran and the Talmud, such as are extremely unfit for the use of a serious Christian poet."[2] But if this tendency to a symbolical character be observable generally in the poetry and romantic literature of the middle ages, it is peculiarly manifest in all works of an heroic character, which were more immediately connected with chivalry. In some instances, indeed, these were professedly allegorical, and directed to a religious end. Such was the Castle of Love, written by Grossetête, bishop of Lincoln, in which he represented the great articles

[1] Hist. of Lit. II, 187. [2] Id. II, 150.

of the Christian faith under the forms of knighthood. In others real history was made the groundwork of symbolical instruction. Thus, in the romance of the Round Table by Wolfram von Eschenbach his hero is at once the type of spiritual warfare and the ideal of a templar. Nay, there is reason to believe that many of the crusaders considered their perilous warfare as symbolical of that which they had internally to wage against their spiritual enemies. Thus in the ancient chronicle of Godfrey of Bouillon it is said that they laboured to gain Paradise, "which is in an allegorical sense compared to the holy city of Jerusalem, which they desired to conquer, at the risk of their bodies, in order to serve God and work out their salvation."[1] In all these compositions there was an imaginary model in the formation of the plan, too sublime for complete development. "The chivalrous poetry, and the Gothic architecture," as Schlegel observes, "have both, in a great measure, remained ideal, and never been brought to perfection in execution." It may be that the grandeur of the original conception comes upon us with a stronger impulse from this unfinished work than it might have done had they been adorned with the last exquisite touches of elegance; the terrible graces are ever conversant with the undefined.[2]

In the romances of chivalry the adventures and scenes recorded were not indeed true, but they represented truths. It was in this sense that St. Ignatius Loyola employed his early associations of chivalry, which he retained after his conversion to religion: remembering the customs which had delighted him in the old romances, he converted them to holy purposes, and devoted himself to Jesus and to Mary, in quality of their knight.[3]

[1] Les Faitz et Gestes du preux Godefroy de Boulion et de ses chevaleureux Freres, f. 157.

[2] Hist. of Lit. I, 334.

[3] Bouhours, Vie de St. Ignace, 23.

In the Morte d'Arthur the beauty of the youthful form, and the brightness of the warrior's aspect, armed in complete steel, are described as symbolical of goodness and of heavenly purity. And in the ancient chronicle of Godfrey of Bouillon, where the death of Baldwin king of Jerusalem is recorded, it is said that he rendered his soul to God "en la compagnie des bien heureux anges et nobles chevaliers sainctz et sainctes de paradis."[1] What a noble image is that of Sir Perceval, whose purity is rewarded with beholding the sacred chalice! "God make hym a good man," says a hermit; "for beaute fayleth hym not as any that lyveth." And we read, "thus Sir Tristram, on a white horse, and in white harness, rode out at a postern, and so he came into the field, as it had been a bright angel." Sir Perceval, as the emblem of purity, is brought forward in the chivalrous romances of England and France and Germany. The Knights of the Round Table are represented as setting out on the quest of the Saint Graal, which is "the hygh way of our Lord Jhesu Cryst, and the way of a true good lyver, not that of synners and of mysbelievers." King Arthur's table is itself symbolical of the perfect faith, with a vacant place to denote the treason of Judas. The "siege perilous" was not made for sinners, being the signification of the place where Christ was seated on the day of his supper; which therefore no knight presumed to approach. The noble fellowship of the Round Table required such virtue in all who belonged to it, that when the four knights prayed Sir Tristan to join it, he replied, "God thank them of theyr great goodness, but as yet I feel well that I am unable to be of their felowship; for I was never yet of such dedes of worthyness to be in the company

[1] Les Faitz et Gestes du preux Godefroy de Boulion et de ses chevaleureux Freres.

of such a felowship."[1] The strangers are addressed in solemn halls; to remind them that "yf they be Jhesu Crystes knyghtes, they ought to be defenders of holy Chirche." Knights of the noblest fellowship are separated from each other, in order to press upon them the prospect of meeting in eternity. When Sir Galahad and Sir Launcelot were about to part in the forest, they heard a voice that said, "Thynke for to doo wel; for the one shall never see the other before the dredeful day of dome."[2] They wander through endless forests and gloomy sierras, meeting with a thousand adventures, which end in tears and penitence; to prove that "unless man conducts himself after the example of the Son of God, all his labours are in vain."[3] They come to haughty castles and fearful towers, where they are received by treacherous knights, who only meditate their destruction; but no sooner have the faithful champions refused the offer of their hosts, and signed themselves in proof of their constancy, than the whole edifice falls down at once unto the earth, and all the threatening monsters disappear; to signify that the servants of Christ in the pilgrimage of life have only to resist temptation for a little while, and that, after proof of penitence, these will suddenly vanish, and leave the soul in a state of the utmost freedom and sweetness and joy. They are represented like sorrowful captives in palaces of passing splendour; to show that man "is miserable whithersoever he turns himself, unless he turns to God":[4] and in poverty and defeat they appear invested with a celestial radiance; to signify that "standing upon earth, man is in heaven when he loves God."[5] Their labour is not for themselves, but for others; their only desire is to acquit them-

[1] Morte d'Arthur, I, 333.
[2] Id. II, 301.
[3] B. Esaiæ Abbat. Orat. XVIII.
[4] De Imit. Christ. I, 22.
[5] St. Augustin, in Ps. LVIII. § 6.

selves with honour in the present life, and "after death to have a syght of the blessed face of Christ": and they are represented as attaining to a high degree of spiritual perfection, or, at least, as possessing a sense of the interior life, notwithstanding their being deprived of all the assistance of learning and leisure; to exemplify what is so often said by holy men, "graditur Deus cum simplicibus, revelat se humilibus, dat intellectum parvulis, aperit sensum puris mentibus, et abscondit gratiam curiosis et superbis."[1] In the noble book of the Saint Graal we read that "though the holy grayle was borne through the hall, there was no knight might see it, but all present took vows to depart in quest of it that they might see it."[2] "You may not see it with worldly eyes; for he wyll not appear where such synners ben." Here is a high symbol. "To whom is truth manifested without God?" asks Tertullian. "To whom is God known without Christ? To whom is Christ revealed without the Holy Spirit? To whom does the Holy Spirit descend without the sacrament of faith?"[3]

"I cannot see these things, you say. Believe, and you will see," adds St. Augustin. "Perchance your eye is wounded and obscured and disturbed by anger, by avarice, by desire, by insane lust; your eye is troubled, it cannot behold that light. Believe, in order that you may see. You will be cured and you will see. Lux orta est justo, et rectis corde jucunditas."[4] The whole story of the Quest of the Grail might be produced to illustrate the symbolical character of Christian chivalry. Sir Melyas is brought wounded to an abbey, where an old monk, who had been a knight in his time, says to him, "for your synne ye were thus wounded;

[1] De Imitat. Christi, lib. IV, 18.
[2] Morte d'Arthur, II, 210.
[3] De Anima.
[4] In Johan. Tractat.

and I merveylle how ye durst take upon you soo ryche a thynge as the hyghe ordre of knyghthoode without clene confession." "Certes," said Sir Gawayne, "I am not happy that I took not the way that Sir Galahad went; for and I may mete with hym, I wyll not departe from hym lyghtly, for alle merveyllous adventures he encheveth." "Sir," said one of the monks, "he will not of your felouship." "Why?" said Sir Gawayne. "Sir," said he, "for ye be wycked and synful, and he is full blessed." The worldly knight is represented by Sir Gawayne, who would do no penance, saying to the hermit, "for we knyghtes adventurous offen suffren grete woo and payne." "Well," said the good man, and then he held his peace. Here is shown the present sorrowful effects of "evil feythe and poure byleve. For our sinnes it wyll not avaylle us to travaylle in this quest," said the disappointed knight. "Truly there ben an hondred suche that never shall prevayle, but to have shame."

Sir Galahad and Sir Perceval, after seeing the holy Grail, "after the dedely flesshe had beheld the spiritual things," never returned to converse with the world. The first departed to God, and was borne up by angels to heaven. The latter took a religious clothing, and went to a hermitage, where "he lived a full holy life for a yere and two moneths, and then passed out of this world." Here the religious sense needs no interpreter. "The vision of God in essence, is the whole essence of our felicity"[1] and "nothing in this world throws such light upon the truth of Scripture, so elevates the soul to the contemplation of heavenly things, and so enlightens the heart to know God, as the passion of Jesus Christ."[2] In the death of the just is ful-

[1] S. Thomas, I, 9, 1, art. 4.
[2] S. Bonaventura, Stim. Divin. Amor. XII.

filled the symbolical destiny of man; "he recovers the image of God in his soul, for the love of God is the restoration of his image; he presents back in oblation to God, to his Father, his image, restored to its original form in holiness, for He is holy; in love, for He is love."[1] He sleeps to the world of shadows, he will awake to reality: his spirit departs in the calm of innocence, or in the sweetness of penitential tears; and flights of angels sing him to his rest.

XVII. The expression has been already hazarded, that there is a system of philosophy peculiarly belonging to the chivalrous spirit. Perhaps the development of this idea may furnish a subject of interesting meditation, although it may lead us back to the ground over which we have lately passed, in tracing the lines of the chivalrous character which were favourable to the impressions of the Christian doctrine. In the first place, it seems sufficiently clear, that chivalry is essentially opposed to all dispositions of mind, and to all schemes of philosophy, which are connected in any degree with the passion for ridicule, and that ardour for levelling every intellectual and moral degree, which have so generally prevailed in all ages and nations, when the influence of religion has been observed to decline. I do not allude to that kind of eloquence which Cicero ascribed to Cæsar, who could treat on severe subjects with cheerfulness, so that neither a joke was excluded by the greatness of the subject, nor yet gravity diminished by the wit.[2] Nor again to that spirit of ironical pleasantry which distinguished all the writings of the Socratic philosophers, of which we should probably form a wrong idea from viewing their facetious sayings detached from other

[1] S. Columban. Instruct. XI: Bibl. Pat. XII.
[2] De Oratore, III, 8.

parts, as they appeared in the collection made by Cato[1]: for such a style and disposition may be very compatible with the noble gravity of which I speak, though the connection between them may be as difficult to trace as that which is however known to subsist between indignation and laughter. But what is essentially opposed to the spirit of chivalry, is an illiberal, petulant, and indecent kind of ridicule, which is not in accordance with humanity or honour: or perhaps it would be more just to say, it is that disposition, the observance of which may impart the secret of the whole modern character, which disposes those who possess it to allow every thought that rises in their mind to grow up and extend to all its consequences, without their being aware of the necessity of combating it, and of crushing it as it were in the shell, as if they were able to disprove the existence and operation of those hostile spirits, who are not merely known to us by revelation, but whose influence, as Friedrich Schlegel justly remarks,[2] is clearly observable throughout all nature; whose operations may be ranked among undeniable facts, without the admission of which no philosopher (those who despise wisdom have never any difficulties) can account for the multiplied phenomena of the moral world. On a future occasion it will be necessary to show in full detail, that in opposition to such a disposition as this, the heroic character must be involved in a certain air of majesty and self-possession, denoting both joy and sadness, or rather, a sadness which is full of resignation, and dignity, and peace.

The poets say that Memnon was the son of Aurora, who, adorned with beautiful armour, and animated with popular applause, came to the Trojan war, and

[1] Cicero de Officiis, lib. I, 29.
[2] Philosophie des Lebens, 172.

was slain by Achilles; and that Jupiter, pitying his destruction, sent birds to modulate certain lamentable and doleful notes at the solemnisation of his funeral obsequies: whose statue also, the sun reflecting on it with his morning beams, did usually send forth a mournful sound. It is tearful to be called upon to view the boisterous winter-night of age before the beautiful summer-day of youth is well begun; to sing the woes of heroes before they have entered upon the stormy sea of dire calamity: but immoderate hopes must die early; and in this outset of our enterprise, in this first stage of our knightly quest, we must reconcile our ears to notes of mourning, and our imagination to forms which will flutter about us like these funereal birds about the obsequies of the young, and become familiar with those softer and graver sounds which always continue to break out by occasions, and new motions, and beginnings of great matters, as it were by the morning rays of the sun.

It is repeatedly observed by Friedrich Schlegel, that the heroic legends of all nations have a great deal in common, so far as their essence and purpose are concerned. In the Nibelungen-lied, as in the legends of Troy and of Iceland, the interest turns on the fate of a youthful hero, who is represented as invested with all the attributes of beauty, magnanimity, and victory; but dearly purchasing all these perishable glories by the certainty of an early and a predicted death. In his person we have a living type of the splendour and decline of the heroic world.[1]

"Even among the most lively nations, the traditions and recollections of the heroic times are invested with a half-mournful and melancholy feeling, a spirit of sorrow, sometimes elegiac, more frequently tragi-

[1] Hist. of Lit. I, 271.

cal, which speaks at once to our bosoms from the inmost soul of the poetry in which they are embodied; whether it be that the idea of a long-vanished age of freedom, greatness, and heroism, stamps, of necessity, such an impression on those who are accustomed to live among the narrow and limited institutions of after-times; or whether it be not rather that poets have chosen to express, only in compositions of a certain sort, and in relation to certain periods, those feelings of distant reverence and self-abasement, with which it is natural to us at all times to reflect on the happiness and simplicity of ages that have long passed away. Æschylus has not been contented with the representation of individual tragical events; throughout all his works there prevails an universal and perpetual recurrence to a whole world of tragedy. In the midst of the ruins and fragments of a perishing world, he delights to astonish us now and then with a view of that old gigantic strength, the spirit of which seems to be embodied in his Prometheus, ever bold and ever free, chained and tortured, yet within invincible." The ancients, like Teletus, saw that the boundless desires of man must render him miserable, since nothing short of being like God could satisfy him;[1] and Lord Bacon shows that they even inculcated the importance of cherishing such desires, as affording the means to advance in arts and wisdom. "Let men be admonished," he says, "to acknowledge the imperfection of nature and art, that they may show gratitude to Heaven, and obtain new benefits; and the accusation of Prometheus their author, though bitter and vehement, will recommend them more than to be effuse in the congratulation of his inventions; for the opinion of having enough is to be accounted one of the greatest causes of having too little."[2] "They that are Pro-

[1] Stobæus, III, 273. [2] On the Wisdom of the Ancients.

metheus's scholars," he continues, "by prudence and prospective wisdom deprive themselves of many lawful pleasures, and vex and torment themselves with cares and fears; for, being chained to the pillar of necessity, they are afflicted with innumerable cogitations, which, because they are very swift, may be fitly compared to an eagle, and those griping and, as it were, gnawing and devouring the liver." In the Christian philosophy there is an analogy to this; for we read, "Quanto altius quis in spiritu profecerit, tanto graviores sæpe cruces invenit: quia exilii sui pœna magis ex amore crescit." [1] Again, with the ancients, Orpheus, a man admirable and divine, signifying philosophy, falls into a deep melancholy, and bequeaths himself to a solitary life in the deserts. "Sorrow rather than joy belongs to men," says the Greek philosopher; "and this too Æsop shows; for, when Prometheus formed mud into man, he did not knead it with water, but with tears." [2] Indicating a truth which was more forcibly pressed upon the remembrance of Christian chivalry by the doctrines and even ceremonies of the Church, whose desire in this respect is constantly expressed by that sublime practice used in repeating the Credo, when the priest chants, in a slow and solemn strain, the "Homo factus est," while all present kneel down; whereas the next words, "Crucifixus etiam pro nobis," are said rapidly, to denote, as Luis of Granada observes, that the great mystery of divine condescension consisted in our Lord taking upon himself the nature of man; for, having once submitted to that humiliation, it was no longer strange that he should have endured what he chose to endure in his sacred humanity.[3] But, leaving these general views, the peculiar connection

[1] De Imit. Christi, lib. II. [2] Stobæi Florileg. I, 53.
[3] Catechism, part IV, 9.

between chivalry and suffering, between grief and honour, is well expressed by the Greek poet, in the words of Hecuba to her heroic daughter, who consents to die—

καλῶς μὲν εἶπας, θύγατερ· ἀλλὰ τῷ καλῷ
λύπη πρόσεστιν.[1]

On a future occasion it will be shown that these thoughts were of constant growth in the soul of chivalry. It is obvious, therefore, that the spirit of ridicule was utterly at variance with its nature. The spirit of ridicule, which disbelieves in the power of virtue, is that of the world, and of the base part of mankind, in all ages. When Phalynus, the herald of Artaxerxes, after the battle of Cunaxa, had heard the noble answer of the Athenian youth, he laughed and said, "Young man, you seem to aim at being a philosopher, and you say some very pretty things; but know this, that you are without common sense, if you fancy that your virtue can prevail against the power of the king."[2]

Phocylides said, that a good man must expect to be often deceived; and Plutarch adds, "that moreover he must make up his mind to be often laughed at, and to bear reproach and calumny."[3] It is curious to observe the scorn and insult with which the sophist Hippias speaks to Socrates, οὕτως ἀλογίστως καὶ ἀσκέπτως καὶ εὐήθως καὶ ἀδιανοήτως διάκεισθε.[4] All the lofty and generous sentiments of a noble philosophy are held up to scorn by the literary churl, who answers to Thersites, in heroic life—

Discit enim citius meminitque libentius illud
Quod quis deridet, quam quod probat et veneratur.

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[1] Eurip. Hecuba, 382.
[2] Anab. II, 1.
[3] De Auditione.
[4] Hippias Major.

Such characters have one grand maxim,

ὅταν τι δρᾷς ἐς κέρδος, οὐκ ὀκνεῖν πρέπει.[1]

It is always men who are impious and obscene, like our "reverend" Chaucer, who have the most bitter sarcasm for expressing the impiety and vice of others. Yet let these applauders of "The Tartuffe" remember that

> Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell;
> Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
> Yet grace must still look so.

Modern critics have said, that vice is never ridiculous, yet, perhaps, as nothing should make a Christian melancholy but mortal sin, so Plato had a profounder sentiment of plain and holy innocence, when he said that there was nothing ridiculous but vice. "This shows," he says, "the vanity of that man who thinks that any thing is ridiculous excepting what is evil, who endeavours to excite a laugh by representing any object which is not evil, or who is serious upon any other matter but what relates to virtue."[2]

The romances of chivalry were not without examples of the scornful spirit, as may be witnessed in Sir Kay's mockery of Perceval, when this flower of knighthood first appeared at King Arthur's court. This spirit of ridicule in Sir Kay was ascribed to his having been nursed by a base person. "He was a good knight, if it had not been that his mode of speech was annoying and displeasing to other knights. His companions forsook him because of his language, which misbecame him."[3] He mocked too frequently at other knights, for which he was dispraised. Sir Tristan said to him, "Now wete

[1] Soph. Philoctetes, 111. [2] Plato de Repub. lib. V, 152.
[3] Merlin, I, 75.

ye well that ye are named the shamefullest knyght of your tongue that now is lyvyng, how be it ye are called a good knyght, but ye are called unfortunate and passyng overthwarte of your tongue."[1] Thus Homer calls Thersites the basest man who came to Troy; and Menander says that laughter is unbecoming in a man of noble birth.[2] It was in the spirit of ridicule that Sir Kay called the strange young man, who came to the court of King Arthur in a rich but ill-shaped coat, "La cote male tayle." The first day, a lion broke loose, and all the queen's knights fled; but this stranger advanced to meet the lion, and overcame him. Then the king made him a knight. "Now, sire, said this young knyght, I requyre you and alle the knyghtes of your courte, that ye calle me by none other name but La Cote Male Tayle, in soo muche as Syr Kay hath soo named me, soo wille I be called;" and with that name did he undertake the adventure of the black shield. However, the dangerous power of ridicule is well represented in romance; for the strange young man chose "rather to fight one hundred knights single handed, to die with worship, than to abyde the scoffs of the damoisel Maledysaunt."[3]

"Man has a great dominion over man," says a fine modern writer; "and of all the evils which he can inflict upon his fellow creatures, the greatest, perhaps, is to place the phantom of ridicule between generous feelings and the actions which they would inspire. Love, genius, talent, even grief, all these are exposed to the power of irony; and it is impossible to calculate how far the dominion of this spirit may be extended. The admiration of great objects may be laughed away in jest; and he who thinks nothing of importance has the appearance of being

[1] Morte d'Arthur, I, 332. [2] Stobæi Florileg. III, 213.
[3] Morte d'Arthur, I, 316.

above everything. If enthusiasm then does not defend the heart and mind, they will permit themselves to be taken on all sides by this aversion to virtue, which unites indolence with gaiety." "Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram?" says the gallant Benedick; "no, if a man will be beaten with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him."

Whatever is most awful and sublime, most eminently generous and beautiful, is exposed chiefly to the base influence of the spirit of ridicule; and were it to prevail, there would be nothing left in the world to please the imagination, to exalt the character, or to attract the heart; there would be nothing in the world really worth living for; and, as a great master of reason has well observed, there would be "never a virtue left to laugh out of countenance." It should never be forgotten that it was with this spirit Julian attacked religion, using not open force, as Diocletian had done, which was, indeed, by this time out of the question, but ridicule and all manner of traitorous arts and reproaches: and thus also, in later times, the most insidious attempt of the adversaries of the Catholic Church has been to render it contemptible, by representing it as a system incompatible with all higher intellectual accomplishment. But without any reference to this particular application of the power of ridicule, it is important to remark the evil of the principle itself, and its tendency to degrade the youthful mind from the chivalrous dignity of its nature. How is a youth, who has been brought up in holy discipline, full of admiration and confidence in virtue, full of reverence and generosity, to withstand the spirit of ridicule, which is incessantly directed by modern writers against all wisdom and goodness? As Plato says, "when men sit down in some great general assembly, as in the theatre, for example, when, with

immense clamour, some things that are said are condemned and others applauded (according to the wisdom of the sophists), out-voicing each other, crying and striking their hands, so that the walls and the whole place in which they are, by their echo, multiply the sound of censure and applause; at that moment, in what state of mind do you think is the youth we speak of?—ἐν δὴ τῷ τοιούτῳ τὸν νέον τίνα οἴει καρδίαν ἴσχειν;—or how can you suppose that his private education should resist these proclamations? and will he not say the same things to be honourable and base, which these men so designate, and will he not become as one of these? Truly he will, of necessity." [1]

These reflections naturally bring to our recollection the immortal book of Cervantes, which seems at first to rise up in terrible array against all who shall dare to maintain that the virtues of the chivalrous character are capable of being reduced to practice. No man will be so hardy, or so insensible, as to deny the genius which belonged to the author of Don Quixote. Quam copiose ac varie vexavit antiquos! Quanto non solum ingenio ac spiritu, sed etiam eruditione et arte ab ipsis mutuatus est, per quæ mox ipsos incesseret! The admirable author of "Guesses at Truth" ascribes a noble motive to Cervantes; for he says that, "when the light of chivalry was expiring, he put his extinguisher on it, and drove away the moths that alone still fluttered around it. He loved chivalry too well to be patient when he saw it parodied and burlesqued, and he perceived that the best way of preserving it from shame, was to throw over it the sanctity of death." But whatever may have been the motives of Cervantes, with respect to the moral tendency of that work, in this or in any age, there will arise quite a

[1] Plato de Repub. VI, p. 289.

legitimate subject for discussion. Many are the men of reflection who think that it is a book never to be read without receiving melancholy impressions, without feelings of deep commiseration for the weakness and for the lot of human nature. What is the character of the hero in this history? It is that of a man possessing genius, virtue, imagination, and sensibility, all the generous qualities which distinguish an elevated soul, with all the amiable features of a disinterested and affectionate heart. Brave, equal to all that history has recorded of the most valiant warriors, loyal and faithful, never hesitating on the fulfilment of his promise; disinterested as he is brave, he contends but for virtue and for glory; if he desires to win kingdoms, it is only to bestow them upon Sancho Panza; a faithful lover, a humane and generous warrior, a kind and affectionate master, a gallant and accomplished gentleman: and this is the man whom Cervantes has represented as the subject of constant ridicule and of occasional reproach. Without doubt there is an important lesson to be derived from the whole,—the lesson which teaches the necessity of prudence and good sense and moderation, of guarding the imagination from excess of exercise, and the feelings from an over-excitement. But this is a lesson to be gently hinted to men of virtue, not to be proclaimed to the profane amidst the mockery of the world. This is not the lesson which the ordinary class of mankind will derive from it; and, if it were, this is not the lesson of which it stands in need. Sismondi has indeed pronounced in favour of the moral tendency of the whole; but, without rejecting his authority, from the general character of his principles, while he acknowledges that the moral of the book is profoundly sad, I can never agree to the justice of his conclusion. Certainly it will require no prejudiced eye in favour of chivalry to

discern, what may be read by him who runs, that the faults of no age of the world are on the side which incurs the reproach and ridicule of Cervantes. There is no danger in an enlightened age, as it is termed, or truly in any age, of men becoming too heroic, too generous, too zealous in the defence of innocence, too violent in hatred of baseness and crime, too disinterested and too active in the cause of virtue and truth: the danger is quite on the other side. There is much to be apprehended from the ridicule which is cast upon sentiment, from the importance which is attached to personal convenience, from substituting laws for virtue, and prudence for self-devotion. There is more danger from the great northern colosses, who make their maxims to suit their bodies, which are but conduits for wine and ale, than from the ingenuous melancholy of the Spaniards, and the lofty noble sentiments of chivalry.

Ségur laments that the fine institution of chivalry should have lost its empire, and that the romance of Don Quixote, by its success and its philosophy, concealed under an attractive fiction, should have completed the ruin, by fixing ridicule even upon its memory,—a sentence, indeed, full of error, for real philosophy needs not to be concealed to be attractive. Cervantes seems to have foreseen the effects which his work would produce, when he gives his own opinion, in the words of Carrasco,—"youngsters read it, grown men understand it, and old people applaud it." Youth saw nothing in it but the beauties derived from the chivalrous and poetical imagination of its author. Grown men discerned his object, and rejoiced in being able to play with their own conscience, while they made a jest of the inspirations which are for repressing the corrupt passions of the heart. This is not a new or singular view. Sir William Temple quotes the saying of an

ingenious Spaniard, who told him "that the history of Don Quixote had ruined the Spanish monarchy; for since that time men had grown ashamed of honour and love, and only thought of pursuing their fortune or satisfying their lust." A modern poet agreed with this opinion:

> Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away;
> A single laugh demolish'd the right arm
> Of his own country. Seldom since that day
> Has Spain had heroes. While romance could charm,
> The world gave ground before her bright array;
> And therefore have his volumes done such harm,
> That all their glory as a composition
> Was dearly purchas'd by his land's perdition.

From remarking how the sages of antiquity observed and deprecated the tendency of this spirit, it is obvious that Cervantes was far from striking out any new path of genius in the plan of his history. He was, in fact, but one of a class of writers well known to the ancients, and styled by them σπουδογέλοιοι; to whose influence the greatest of historians seems to ascribe the chief corruption of Grecian manners, when he says that "ingenuousness, in which generosity principally consists, was laughed down and abolished."[1] A critic of our own times might, therefore, have traced the spirit of Cervantes farther back than to the mock romances of the middle age, such as the Friars of Richmond, and Tournament of Tottenham. Notwithstanding the ingenious and learned criticism of a modern translator, I am of opinion that in the comedies of Aristophanes we find an early model of Don Quixote; for the application of the principle to the feelings of a different age forms the only difference. To the names which recalled the dignity and virtue of a chivalrous age the Romans clung with ardour to the last; yet even

[1] Thucyd. lib. III, 83.

in the age of Cato and of Cicero there were men who held "nihil esse præstabilius otiosa vita, et plena et conferta voluptatibus: eos autem qui dicerent, dignitati esse serviendum, officii rationem in omni vita, non commodi esse ducendam, vulnera excipienda, mortem oppetendam, vaticinari atque insanire dicebant."[1] It was not surprising, therefore, in the later ages of the empire, that there should be critics who used to say of their ancestors, "sunt horridi, et impoliti, et rudes, et informes. Equidem fatebor vobis simpliciter, me in quibusdam antiquorum vix risum, in quibusdam autem vix somnum tenere." It was a marvel to such an age, when it was told of a people, among whom no one ever laughed at vice, and where to corrupt and to be corrupted was not called the custom of society. "Who does not know," says the writer of the dialogue on the causes of corrupt eloquence, "that eloquence and other arts have declined from that ancient glory, not through the want of men, but through the indifference of youth, the neglect of parents, the ignorance of masters, and the forgetfulness of ancient manners? Formerly the son of chaste parents used to be educated in the breast and arms of his mother, whose chief praise it was to remain at home and to take care of her children. Some relation used to be chosen, of mature age, of approved and respectable manners, to whom the offspring of the house would be committed, before whom no one ever dared to speak or act anything disgraceful or dishonest; who tempered not only the studies and labours, but even the relaxations and play of boys, to a certain holy and reverential tone. Thus we read that Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, Aurelia, of Cæsar, and Atia, of Augustus, presided over education, and produced princes.

[1] Cicero pro P. Sextio.

But now a child is handed over to some Greek woman, a servant, with whom is associated one or other of the slaves, generally the most vile of the whole number. Parents themselves, too, accustom their children neither to probity nor to modesty, but to licentiousness and loquacity; by which means, impudence, and the contempt of others, gradually insinuate themselves into their minds; but, above all, the proper and peculiar vice of this city seems to me to be conceived in the very womb of mothers, namely, the theatrical passion, and the love of gladiators and horse-races. And when the mind is occupied and oppressed with such matters, what place is left for noble arts? when do you meet with any one who ever speaks of any thing else at home?" Ingenuousness is laughed down and abolished.

But to return to Aristophanes, and to show that he was the Cervantes of Greece. In every page of these writers there are features of resemblance to be marked. The comic poet is glad of an occasion to laugh at the rites of religion.[1] Cervantes makes Don Quixote hold a vigil in the court-yard of the inn, that he may raise a laugh at the expense of that ordination, which was symbolical of the piety and purity of knighthood; and he employed the most beautiful description of a procession of penitents but to play off the madness of his hero. Aristophanes[2] accuses Euripides of making men

φασκούσας οὐ ζῆν τὸ ζῆν·

alluding to that sublime sentence of the poet,

[1] Ranæ, 355. Vespæ, 861. Equites, 1253. Aves, 580, ad fin.
[2] Ranæ, 1082; and again 1475, where Euripides grieves at being left in Hades, and Bacchus says to him,

τίς οἶδεν, εἰ τὸ ζῆν μέν ἐστι κατθανεῖν,
τὸ πνεῖν δὲ δειπνεῖν, καὶ τὸ καθεύδειν κώδιον;

τίς δ' οἶδεν, εἰ τὸ ζῆν μέν ἐστι κατθανεῖν,
τὸ κατθανεῖν δὲ ζῆν;

of which Socrates makes such fine use in one of his most divine discourses.[1] Both are guilty of misrepresenting the objects of their satire,[2] of making them contradict the common sense of mankind,[3] that they may appear exclusively men of judgment;[4] of descending to the grossest jests for the purpose of making them more ridiculous;[5] of laughing at the sublimest precepts of philosophy;[6] of making the end and effects of virtue to appear ridiculous;[7] of holding up to ridicule the noblest associations of patriotism, the heroes and victories of old;[8] of maliciously misapplying, for the purpose of satire, the forms and expressions consecrated by former genius;[9] of laughing at purity of manners by contrasting it with gay licentiousness;[10] of making virtue and wisdom the instruments of evil;[11] of ridiculing, on insufficient grounds, the taste of those whom they censure;[12] of vain triumphing and abuse, as if their adversary were destroyed, and without an apology.[13]

There are other reflections suggested by a refer-

[1] Plato, Gorgias. [2] Nubes, 247. [3] Nubes.
[4] Ranæ, 1491. [5] Nubes, 387, 698. Acharnenses, 80.
[6] Nubes, 842, where the young man asks what can be learned from such wretches; and is told,

γνώσει δὲ σαυτὸν ὡς ἀμαθὴς εἶ καὶ παχύς.

Thus laughing at the fundamental precept of all philosophy.
[7] Nubes, 146, et pas.
[8] Equites, 781. Aves, 638. Achar. 181.
[9] Aves, 687. Achar. 209.
[10] The end of the Knights.
[11] When the son learns from Socrates to beat his father and deny the gods.
[12] Ranæ, 1265.
[13] Nubes, 103, ad fin. It would be tedious to enumerate the parallel places in Don Quixote; but they will strike every reader of that history.

ence to Don Quixote. What does Cervantes wish men to substitute for the disposition of the knight whom he ridicules? Is it the mean, envious, and spiteful heart of the bachiller Sanson Carrasco, who grows jealous of a madman? Is it the courtesy of the Duke and Duchess, who make a laughing-stock of their poor guest, and suffer him and his squire to be insulted by their insolent domestics, and this even in their presence? Is it the politeness or charity of Don Antonio Moreno at Barcelona, who leads the poor knight about the city with a label pinned to his back, to excite the jeers of the populace? Is it that of his wife, a lady of quality, inviting her friends to a ball, for the sole purpose of sharing in the diversion which his extravagance occasioned? Is it the tone of feeling of those who appoint a running at the ring, "to make his madness a mere public diversion?" Is it the temper of Don Diego de Miranda, the sober gentleman of La Mancha, with his tame partridges and ferrets? one of those men whom St. Bernard reproves for saying, "Sufficit nobis, nolumus esse meliores quam patres nostri;" —men who have lapsed into the rest of false security, which is the oldest inheritance of sin belonging to mankind; who think that they have knowledge enough to need no teacher, devotion enough to need no new fires, justice enough to need no penance. Is it the paternal affections of the man who says he should be happier without his son, because the young man was a poet? Is it the good sense and feeling of the niece, and housekeeper, and squire, who, when their friend and master was on his death-bed, "made much of themselves, proving that there is a strange charm in the thoughts of a good legacy or the hopes of an estate, which wonderfully removes, or at least alleviates, the sorrow that men would otherwise feel for the death of friends"? Are these examples of that virtue and wisdom to which Cer-

vantes would have his hero return on his death-bed, declaring himself an enemy to the whole generation of knights? Cervantes must produce new examples for imitation before he can expect that men will be laughed out of their reverence for those which were the admiration of their fathers; and, indeed, the modern despisers of chivalry must bring forward models of a higher virtue than any which their annals have as yet furnished, before the ancient code of humanity will be abandoned by men of honour. Meanwhile their ridicule, when it is not impiously directed against Heaven, is utterly useless with regard to any purpose of moral good; for it is certain that, in these ages, men have more need of new fires to be kindled within them and round about them, than of any thing to allay their forwardness. "There is little or no zeal now," says a great modern writer, "but the zeal of envy, and killing as many as they can, and damning more than they can; and therefore this discourse is less necessary. A physician would have but small employment near the Riphæan mountains, if he could cure nothing but calentures, catarrhs, and dead palsies; colds and consumptions are their evils; and so are lukewarmness and deadness of spirit the proper maladies of our age."

So far, then, it may be concluded, that the philosophy which belongs to chivalry is essentially opposed to the spirit of ridicule. It is at once obvious that it must be equally at variance with the whole system of Epicurus, which annihilates all belief, and all lofty feeling; which, as Schlegel says, in a scientific point of view, is connected with the most absurd of hypotheses; which, in its influence on life, if not immoral, is at least selfish and unpatriotic; and which, above all, is the deadly enemy of every thing like fancy and poetry. Cicero well remarks, that in the school of Epicurus, no one ever heard so much as the name pronounced of Lycurgus, Solon,

Miltiades, Themistocles, or Epaminondas;[1] and Maximus of Tyre goes so far as to say, "I except always Epicurus when I speak of philosophers, among whom he cannot be named."[2] Cicero speaks as if he thought chivalry the criterion of all moral philosophy, saying of Epicurus, "Nil generosum sapit atque magnificum."[3] "Far be it from me," says St. Augustin, "to compare the moral philosophy of Plato with the system of those who place the judgment of truth in the senses of the body, supposing that by their uncertain and deceitful rules all things should be estimated; like the Epicureans, and all of that class, and even the Stoics, who, when they vehemently loved that art of disputation which they call dialectics, thought that it was derived from the senses of the body; asserting that the soul thence derived the notions, which they termed ἐννοίας, of the things which they explain, and that hence the whole mode of learning and teaching was propagated and connected. I often wonder, when they say that the wise only are beautiful, by what senses of the body they behold that beauty, by what fleshly eyes they can discern that form and grace of wisdom. But the men whom deservedly we prefer to others, distinguished the things which are discerned by the mind from those which are attained by the senses, neither taking from the senses what they can yield, nor ascribing to them more than they can yield: but they said that the light of minds, enabling them to learn all things, was the same God by whom all things are made."[4] There is nothing in the heroic character or annals which can please men whose hearts have been blighted and whose souls darkened by that profane philosophy, as Plato terms it, that system of the plebeian Locke (de acumine agitur ejus,

[1] De Finibus, lib. XI.
[2] Dissert. X, 4.
[3] De Finibus, lib. I, 7.
[4] De Civitate Dei, lib. VIII, 7.

non de moribus); "for all philosophers," says Cicero, "are to be called plebeian, who dissent from Plato and Socrates, and that family;"[1] a system which is ascribed by Cudworth to a want of consideration, or to a fond and sottish dotage upon corporeal sense, which hath so far imposed upon some, as to make them believe that they have not the least cogitation of any thing not subject to corporeal sense, or that there is nothing in human understanding or conception which was not first in bodily sense; "a doctrine," says this profound thinker, "highly favourable to atheism;" one certainly which is destructive of all chivalry, of all its generous raptures and refining fires, exalting and purifying the soul. We have all of us, says Cudworth, *μάντευμά τι* (as both Plato and Aristotle call it), a certain presage in our minds of some higher good and perfection than either power or knowledge. Aristotle himself declares, that there is *λόγου τι κρεῖττον*, which is *λόγου ἀρχή*: for, saith he, *λόγου ἀρχὴ οὐ λόγος, ἀλλά τι κρεῖττον*. And after quoting Plato de Repub. vi. p. 477, he proceeds thus, "in all which of Plato's there seems to be little more than what may be experimentally found within ourselves; namely, that there is a certain life, or vital and moral disposition of soul, which is much more inwardly and thoroughly satisfactory, not only than sensual pleasure, but also than all knowledge and speculation whatsoever." Socrates shews that "knowledge and truth have indeed a certain form of good, but that they are not themselves the summum bonum, for this is something still more august." "The feeling is often the deeper truth, the opinion the more superficial one," says the author of Guesses at Truth. If the affections were taken away, reason would be like the pilot of a

[1] Tuscul. I, 23.

ship forsaken by the winds, in a profound calm. This is what Castiglione says.[1] Friedrich Schlegel shews that it is the feeling, the imagination, the sentiment of honour, rather than reason, which can distinguish the minute line which often separates right from wrong;[2] and that it is in the cold, abstract, and dead reason, in a dialectic, contentious spirit of argumentation, that the first source lies of all errors of belief, and of all corrupt destructive thought. "Medea modo et Atreus commemorabantur a nobis, heroïcæ personæ," says Cicero, "inita subductaque ratione, nefaria scelera meditantes."[3]

It cannot appear strange that chivalry should be despised and ridiculed, if we reflect upon the number of men in these days whose principles are taken from that perplexed and monstrous system of moral philosophy or refined selfishness, which has been held and recommended by a numerous class of writers in successive ages of the world, from the Epicureans of old, as represented by Torquatus in Cicero's first book, *De Finibus*, to Hobbes and Paley. The contrary doctrine of the ancient philosophy, as well as of the Catholic Church, may be ridiculed and ascribed to enthusiasm; yet while it can boast of such champions among the old sages as Aristotle and Plato, whom, the wiser a man is, as Sir Philip Sidney said, "the more just cause he shall find to have in admiration," and, under the light of revelation, the old holy fathers of the Church, while all the glory of chivalry, all the mighty deeds "with which old story rings," bear evidence to its practical excellence and to its divine power on the heart of man, certes we need not fear the force of those who are in array against us.

[1] The Courtier, IV, 377. [2] Philosophie des Lebens, 44.
[3] De Nat. Deorum, III, 28.

Nathless we may lament the extent of the evil which they are enabled to occasion. In these days, alas! when many an empty head is shaken at Aristotle and Plato, it is little marvel if many a cold heart be insensible to the feelings of chivalry, and unable to kindle into rapture at the names of Charlemagne and Saint Louis, of Richard and of Henry. Let us mark the sentiments of the ancient philosophy in this respect. "It is the characteristic of a generous and nobly born man," says Aristotle, "not to attend to his own interest."[1] A good man acts *τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα, τοῦτο γὰρ τέλος τῆς ἀρετῆς*.[2] It is necessary to be brave, not from necessity, *ἀλλ' ὅτι καλόν· σκόπος γὰρ τὸ καλόν*.[3] He who gives money to whom he ought not, *ἢ μὴ τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα*, is not liberal;[4] and, speaking of a great-minded man, he says, *καὶ οἷος κεκτῆσθαι μᾶλλον τὰ καλὰ καὶ ἄκαρπα τῶν καρπίμων καὶ ὠφελίμων*:[5] and after observing that music is of no practical use, he adds, *τὸ δὲ ζητεῖν πανταχοῦ τὸ χρήσιμον ἥκιστα ἁρμόττει τοῖς μεγαλοψύχοις καὶ τοῖς ἐλευθέροις*.[6] Then, as for the principle of refined selfishness, the philosophy of chivalry can never admit even its expression; for, according to this philosophy, words are of great importance; so that, supposing for a moment that it is only a question of words, it cannot on that account be trifled with. "I know well," says Socrates to Crito, "that the not speaking well, *τὸ μὴ καλῶς λέγειν*, not only is in itself vicious, but also it vitiates the soul."[7] An English philosopher treats the question with the contempt that it deserves. "It is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself; it is right earth, for that only stands fast upon its own centre; whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens move upon the centre of another, which

[1] Ethic. IV, 1. [2] Id. III, 7. [3] Id. III, 12.
[4] Id. IV, 1. [5] Id. IV, 3. [6] Polit. lib. VIII, c. 3.
[7] Plato, Phædo.

they benefit." What the servant says in the old comedy is no less just—

φιλο μέν ἐστιν ἀρχὴ τοῦ κακοῦ.[1]

"In truth," says Plato, "the cause of all sins is the having an over-great love of ourselves; for a great man should neither love himself nor the things which belong to him, but only justice. From this cause each man fancies his own ignorance is wisdom; and, in short, through it we are all ignorant that we know nothing, while we suppose that we know all things. Therefore it is necessary for every man to avoid, with the utmost care, the over-much love of himself."[2]

It is true, as Aristotle admits, that "good men, by their very goodness, confer the greatest benefit on themselves;" but, as even this heathen sage observes, "It is not with the view of benefiting themselves that they are good." "Ad altiora quædam et magnificentiora, mihi crede, nati sumus," says Cicero. "Are we to suppose that youths of a fine disposition, and of great promise, intend only to study their own interest, and to do whatever may be advantageous to themselves? Do you not observe what a perturbation of all things must follow? what a confusion? You take away kindness, you take away grace, which are the bonds of harmony; for that is not to be regarded as a kindness but a lending on interest, when you do good to some one for your own sake. Nor is that a grace which is conferred upon another from the same motive. All the great virtues will fall to the ground under the dominion of pleasure."[3] Though virtue and utility are in the end inseparable, yet it is by the former, as dictating a rule, that the views

[1] Aristoph. Vespæ, 77. [2] Plato, Leges, V.
[3] De Finibus, II, 35.

and actions even of the heathen were to be regulated; for attend to the distinction observed by Cicero: "nec quia utile honestum est, sed quia honestum utile."[1] We are not to examine whether an action be expedient that it may be virtuous, for here is a point which we may not be able to determine; but whether it be virtuous, or, in other words, whether it be agreeable to God, that it may be expedient; which is an inquiry that will never terminate in uncertainty. And this is not mere verbal refinement. They who first look to expediency, supposing that they therefore consult virtue, are generally defeated in both objects which they desire to secure: their virtue is forfeited, and their policy unsuccessful. The words of the Corinthian ambassador to the Athenians, as recorded by Thucydides, were to this effect: "Let no one suppose that these things are just, and that others are useful; for there is most utility in avoiding all crime as far as possible:"[2] *τό τε γὰρ ξυμφέρον ἐν ᾧ ἄν τις ἐλάχιστα ἁμαρτάνῃ μάλιστα ἕπεται.* But some men affirm that no one can forget his own interest, and that selfishness is the secret spring of all generous actions. What! is no credit then due to the oath of Palinurus, when speaking to Æneas in the shades, concerning his fall into the sea, he says,

> Maria aspera juro,
> Non ullum pro me tantum cepisse timorem,
> Quam tua ne, spoliata armis, excussa magistro,
> Deficeret tantis navis surgentibus undis?[3]

Is there not a generosity most lovely and laudable to all, which disposeth men, with their own pain, hazard, and detriment, to succour and relieve others in distress? The frame of our nature, indeed, speaketh that we are not born for ourselves: we

[1] De Off. II, 30. [2] Lib. I, 42. [3] Lib. VI.

shall find man, if we contemplate him, to be a nobler thing than to have been designed to serve himself, or to satisfy his single pleasure; his endowments are too excellent, his capacities too large, for so mean and narrow a purpose. How pitiful a creature were man, if this were all he was made for! How sorry a faculty were reason, if it served not to better uses! He debaseth himself, he disgraceth his nature, who hath so low conceits. But it is vain to combat such opinions upon metaphysical grounds; for, as the Count de Maistre says, "It is only the spirit of religion which can cure this malady." It is religion which teaches the dignity of the human soul; which convinces man that there are other things in heaven and earth besides those which are objected to his senses; which declares self-love to be "the capital and leading vice, the apostle placing it in the van." "There are but two distinct classes of men," says an eminent writer, "upon the earth: that which is susceptible of enthusiasm, and that which despises it. All other differences are the effect of society. The one has not words for his feelings, the other knows what should be said to conceal the vacuum in his heart: but the spring which flows from the rock at the command of heaven, this source is real genius, real religion, real love." In this respect it is the science of the saints, not the system of the sophists, with its morality of consequences, which corresponds with the disposition of chivalry. Clemens Alexandrinus says, "that the perfect man acts well, not with a view to any personal advantage, but because he is bound to be perfect, and that he would prefer the knowledge of God to his own salvation."[1] "This is what I believe firmly," says St. Bonaventura, "without any doubt, that angels and blessed men wholly centre in God, that they

[1] Stromat. lib. IV, 22.

love God inwardly with all their minds, so that beyond all comparison they love God more than themselves: immo non credo quod seipsos diligant, nisi propter Deum."[1] "The praise of one's self is most corrupt, unless when it is wholly resolved into a desire of the divine honour; not reflected towards self, nor bent in any other direction, but solely and simply tending to God."[2] "The saints of old," says Nieremberg, "sought not their own utility." Moses wrought great miracles, but, says St. Chrysostom, his greatest was that blessed voice, "aut dimitte eis hanc noxam, aut, si non facis, dele me de libro tuo." Similar to this mind was that of David's, "Ego pastor peccavi; et hi quid fecerunt?" So also Abraham sought not his own, but the interest of the woman. Jonah exposed himself to save the city; so also acted Jacob, not seeking his own good; and Joseph only regarding that of his brothers. "Magna quidem hæc et angelo digna vita." Witness again St. Paul, St. Chrysostom himself, who would have given his eyes to convert souls; St. Francis, St. Ignatius Loyola, and generally all the holy saints of Christ's Church.[3] The Count of Stolberg cites St. Paul, "Therefore if you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth. For you are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, who is your life; then you also shall appear with him in glory": and then he exclaims, "Oh! the sublime, the heaven-possessing, the tranquillising, the soul-transporting, and already beatifying philosophy of Christians!"[4] "O Domine!" cries

[1] Stimulus Divini Amoris, c. XII. [2] Id. c. VII.
[3] Doct. Ascet. I. [4] Geschichte, VII, 533.

St. Ignatius Loyola, "da ut non degenerem ab excelsis cogitationibus filiorum Dei."[1]

To the Epicurean principles concerning pleasure, the spirit of chivalry must be equally opposed: it would be unable to secure men from falling, and from being humbled to the dust; but it would at least never suffer reason to pander to the will. The sentence of Aristotle expresses its sentiment: "Virtue consists in its relation to pleasure and pain; for through pleasure we do evil, and through pain we fly from honour."[2] Ὁ μὲν σώφρων ἡμῶν θεῷ φίλος, ὅμοιος γάρ·[3] this is the remarkable expression of Plato. In another place he says, "There is nothing better than the deliverance of the soul from the body";[4] that is, no doubt, from the disorder of the body. To be enslaved to the passions is the most disgraceful condition:

> O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
> O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
> Art more engag'd!———

"Bonitas mater est castitatis," says the blessed Abbot Esaia:[5] and we have seen that in the symbolic language of chivalrous romance, it was only Sir Perceval who was able to achieve the high adventure. It was not, indeed, with precepts of human morality, and in the language of the utilitarian sophists, that chivalry resisted the Epicurean philosophy; but it was the holy faith of Catholics which invested it with a panoply of unsullied brightness. It did not encourage itself saying, "Remember how much time and money and health and reputation you will forfeit by a life of pleasure"; but it rather trusted to some ejaculation like that in the Imitation

[1] Exercitia Spiritualia, III, 1.
[2] Ethic. II, 3.
[3] Plato de Legibus, lib. IV.
[4] Ibid. VIII.
[5] Orat. XVI: Bibl. Pat. XII.

of Christ: "Adveni, cœlestis suavitas, et fugiat a facie tua omnis impuritas."[1]

Again, it is clear that the philosophy of chivalry must be a philosophy of the heart; therefore it was prepared to admit the wisdom of those counsels which said, with St. Augustin, that "the intention makes the good work"; and with St. Thomas, that "moral actions receive their form from the intention." Even the ancient moralist said that "no one would call a man just who did a just action, but without delighting in justice, nor noble who did not take pleasure in noble actions."[2] The wisdom of such views appeared in those lessons which taught that "of suggestion there ariseth cogitation; of cogitation, affection; of affection, delight; of delight, consent; of consent, work; of work, custom; of custom, despair; of despair, defending of sin; of defending of sin, boasting; of boasting, damnation."[3]

Again, a mind like that of chivalry and youth, both, as we have seen, essentially symbolical, could never admit the philosophy of the Manichæans. The words of St. Augustin were more agreeable to it: "He who praises the nature of the soul as the highest good, and accuses the nature of the flesh as evil, loves the soul carnally, and flies from the flesh carnally; for he derives that sentiment from human vanity, not from divine truth."[4] "The soul alone," says William of Paris, "is certainly not man; would it be a man if joined to a body of brass?"[5] All that is lovely and admirable in this beautiful world—the sweetness of flowers, the clearness of the sky, the cool blue of the placid waters, the solemn recesses of the grove—should be loved in reverence to their Author. "Quales impetus habebas ad

[1] Lib. III, 48. [2] Aristot. Ethic. I, 8.
[3] Canisius's Catechism, quoting Greg. lib. IV, Mor. c. 27, and Isid. lib. II, de Sum. Bon. c. 23.
[4] De Civitate Dei, XIV, 5. [5] De Anima, lib. III.

mundum, tales habeas ad Artificem mundi," says St. Augustin. The simple and just philosophy to which the generous part of mankind will ever be attached, is in accordance with all the innocent tastes and simple views of youthful nature. "Tell me, what is your philosophy?" says Sophylus to Euthyphron, in one of the dialogues of Hemsterhuis;[1] to whom the latter replies, "My philosophy, dear Sophylus, is that of children; it is that of Socrates; it is that which is found at the bottom of our hearts, of our souls, when we take pains to seek for it." Even Cicero speaks of certain great rules by which all things should be directed, and which seem to have been let fall from heaven in order to furnish men with a stable and incontrovertible science.[2] He says that "right nature is of more avail than depraved reason";[3] that "the illustrious men of the Roman republic seem rather to have followed nature without any learned system, and that they were better taught by nature than they could have been by philosophy; and that all philosophy which introduced this mode of distinguishing expediency from virtue, so far from assisting, was calculated to corrupt nature."[4]

The philosophy which belongs to the chivalrous class of mankind, like their religion, is never seen acting a part; it is always natural, simple, timid, and humble. "I adore thee, infant Jesus!" exclaims Fénelon; "oh, qui me donnera d'être aussi enfant que vous! O men, who are wise in your own thoughts, prudent in your designs, and composed in your discourses, I fear you; your greatness intimidates me,—as children are alarmed at the presence of great personages." Such a philosophy would no more prompt men to pluck the ribbon

[1] Sophyle, ou de la Philosophie: Œuvres Philosophiques de F. Hemsterhuis, tom. I, 292.
[2] De Finibus, lib. I, 19. [3] Ibid. II, 18. [4] Ibid. III, 3.

from the cap of youth, than to deprive age of its sables and its weeds. Now it was for minds of this class, formed according to these principles, that the ceremonies and external discipline of the Catholic Church would have the most powerful attraction. This was the philosophy which used to prompt the poor Indians of Paraguay, on Corpus Christi day, to raise triumphal arches of the most beautiful flowers and fruits, in the adorning of which they took the greatest delight, sometimes contriving means to draw wild and savage nature into the sphere of homage, so that tigers and lions would be seen ranged on each side of the procession-way, while birds of the most exquisite plumage would appear flying from branch to branch, displaying their beautiful wings.[1]

According to this philosophy, Revelation cannot be confined to the written word of God and to tradition. "Nature," says Father Luis of Granada, "is also a book written on the outside and within, in which the finger of God is visible."[2] Friedrich Schlegel says, "It is also a kind of holy Scripture in a visible and bodily form, proclaiming in living characters the omnipotence of the Creator. Revelation is, in fact, fourfold; in the conscience, in nature, in the Scriptures, and in tradition, or the history of the world."[3]

The saints were agreed upon the moral effects of such a philosophy. "We daily see with our own eyes," says Luis of Granada, "that in monasteries, where external things are best observed, there is always more virtue, more devotion, more charity, more force, more fear of God, and, in short, more Christianity; as, on the other hand, where these are neglected, religion falls to ruin."[4] But this real

[1] Muratori.
[2] Catechism, Preface, p. 10.
[3] Philosophie des Lebens, 85.
[4] Sinner's Guide.

philosophy of nature, which belongs to youth and chivalry, does not merely manifest itself in contra-distinction to that of the Manichæans, favouring the development of beauty and grace, for it contains the great conservative principles upon which the happiness and security of human society depend. To illustrate this, I will quote a passage from the preliminary discourse to the great work of M. de Haller, on the Restoration of Political Science: "Shall I say how nature herself conducted me to form this enterprise? And may it be allowable for me to record for this purpose one of my oldest recollections? While in the age of first youth, and almost at my mother's knees, I read in a German work the assertion, then commonly received, that men took their origin in a state of nature; and that in delegating their common power, they had sacrificed a part of their liberty in order to secure better the preservation of the remainder. This single idea contracted my heart, and could find no entrance into my mind. How insane would be such a grant! how uncertain the result! and to what limits was it extended? Who would guarantee the more secure possession of the remainder? What right had the first men to bind their posterity to such a hazardous and dangerous convention? Would it not be better to remain in the state of nature? and would it not be possible to return to it? These and similar doubts presented themselves to me, and were my torment during many years. Certainly I little thought then that in my maturer years the sentiment which I experienced in youth would change into a full conviction; that I should recognize in this error the cause of all the disasters and crimes of our age; and that I should undertake to explain without the social or factitious contract, without this delegation of power, this renunciation of liberty, this abandonment of the state of nature, not only the legitimate

formation of all social relations, but also that of states. The doubts of my youth could not resist my occupations and the crowd of contrary authorities. I did not dare to regard as false an assertion which I found in such a number of writings, and I referred it to the number of those mysteries which we must believe without being able to comprehend them. Even at a period long subsequent I was in the situation of a multitude of men of good faith. Although I did not feel in myself the force to refute the prevailing principles, I nevertheless experienced in my inmost soul an invincible repugnance to all the developments of this principle, which were improperly termed its abuse or its excesses. They inspired me with horror." What an admirable illustration does this furnish of the fact which I am here establishing! I leave my reader, trusting to the experience of his own soul, to supply a similar in the case of all those pernicious systems which may have been presented to his youth in the writings of Locke and Paley, and of many Scotch economists and metaphysicians, which, like the astounding and inconsistent propositions of the modern creed, are all repugnant to the sentiments of youth, and destructive of the whole chivalrous as well as spiritual life.

Again, a spirit free from the affectation of singularity, and full of reverence for the authority of elders, must be opposed to all novel systems which contradict the broad eternal principles of morality and the great original traditions of mankind. The master who corrected Cyrus for his judgment respecting the great boy who took the little boy's coat, followed this philosophy, which allows of no ingenious fancies in contradiction to simple justice and positive law.[1] There can be no new discoveries

[1] Xen. Cyropæd. I, 3.

in moral philosophy; for time, which destroys the successive opinions of men, has long since confirmed, beyond the power of sophistry, the judgments of nature.[1] We have not to try to make out new principles of action, but to act in obedience to the positive law of God. "Life, therefore," as Aristotle says, "is practice, not poetry or invention."[2] Public opinion has nothing to do with determining virtue and vice:

αἰσχρὸν τό γ' αἰσχρὸν, κἂν δοκῇ, κἂν μὴ δοκῇ.

Nothing has occurred since the Homeric age to prove that poverty can be an excuse for crime.[3] The short axioms of the old humanity, such as the sayings ascribed to the seven sages of Greece, are not to be deemed obsolete,[4] from a vain desire of believing in the perfectibility of the human race. Men are not to legislate, nor philosophers to discourse, as if the world were hastening to a state of original order or exemption from evil; for, however they may love the present world, it is not here that the reign of justice will be established. They must be content to leave it for good as well as for evil; nor will Christianity justify their entertaining views in this respect opposed to those of the ancient sage, who says in the Theætetus of Plato, "It is not possible that all evils should be removed, for there will continue to be something opposed to good. With the gods, it may not be so ordained, but mortal nature and this present scene are thus doomed to revolve: therefore we must endeavour to fly from here as quickly as possible, and flight is accomplished by being made as far as possible conformable to God, and we are made conformable to God by becoming just and holy."

[1] Cicero de Nat. Deorum, lib. II, 2. [2] Polit. lib. I, c. 2.
[3] Od. XIV. [4] Stobæi Florileg. I.

Another important characteristic of the philosophy of chivalry is its simplicity. The spirit of Christian chivalry can never be induced to placé confidence in any of the mystical unintelligible systems of men as long as it possesses religion, which adopts, or rather, which originally inspired, the simple axioms of the old morality for the guide of its understanding as well as of its actions. Not to make mention of all the fine philosophic phrases which are now so much used by men who wish to identify themselves with the spirit of what they call a thinking people and of the age, which really in a vast majority of instances contain no sense at all, nor can convey any idea to the mind, being merely a collection of sounding words, in use with persons who have never had any mental exercise on subjects higher than the interests of animal life; there has arisen a kind of cabalistic philosophy, supported chiefly by men who became sensible of the utter degradation which would result from the principles of the French atheists, without returning to the more solid foundation of the philosophy of the Church.

But what philosophy can that be which separates itself from the doctrines of our holy faith? "A dire vray," says Arnigio,[1] "il n'y en peut avoir d'autre qu'une sale et orde, errante et vagabonde, faulse et trompeuse." Friedrich Schlegel speaks of "a system, according to which unintelligibility is regarded as a kind of criterion to distinguish true from false knowledge; a system which dwells in unattainable light, where the discoverer feels confident that he possesses a consciousness and clearness of understanding which almost no other mortal can obtain for himself, and a perception of truths at which no one else has arrived, or can

[1] Les Veilles, p. 146.

arrive; while, for the greatest part, it is only the false light of an internal dark-lantern, which is produced by this delusion of the unintelligible, or rather of the want of understanding. Totally opposed to this, he says, is the philosophy of life, which requires no extraordinary talents from its disciples. This living philosophy has no interest in cold abstractions and unintelligible expressions. It is no idle speculation and no unintelligible hypothesis; it is not more difficult, and it has no occasion to be darker than any other discourse concerning spiritual things; it can be as clear and as easy as the task of observing nature and of studying history. Is it abstract and unintelligible? This is then only a consequence, and generally an infallible sign, of its being in error." [1]

This cabalistic philosophy, when employed against the doctrines of the Christian Church, would be equally opposed to the mind of chivalry. In many modern works of general literature and philosophy, where theological subjects are introduced, there is occasion for adopting the very words of Cicero in arguing against Epicurus, where he says, "Am I not able to understand the force of words? or am I now to begin learning Greek or Latin? But if I cannot comprehend the meaning of what Epicurus says, examine whether it be not his fault, who speaks so that no one can understand him. On two accounts he might, indeed, so speak without offending, either like Heraclitus upon the secrets of nature, or like Plato in the Timæus, where the difficulty arises from the subject, not from the words; but Epicurus, as I think, does not wish to speak plainly, if he could: nor does he treat upon an obscure subject, like physicians; nor upon one which requires much art, like that of the mathematicians; but he speaks

[1] Philosophie des Lebens, 29.

of a thing which is clear and easy, and even trite and obvious with the people."[1]

Now take an example of this philosophy thus applied. The writer of the article on the history of the apostolic age, in the Encyclopædia Metropolitana, who, as a Christian, must be supposed to profess his belief in one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, says of the subject of Christian unity, "Few points have been less satisfactorily discussed than the exact import of this word: nor do we pretend to remove all the difficulty with which the question is encumbered." The sum of the observations added as "tending to give clearer views on the subject," is to this effect—they affirm that "it was a unity against which schism or heresy would not be necessarily an offence; and that nothing was so likely to prevent schism as an equality of dispensation, which would leave all classes of converts, in every age or country, without room for jealousy and discontent; and that neither schism nor heresy is properly an offence against the Church universal, but against some particular Church, and by its own members; and that therefore no Church can be properly called either heretical or schismatical; that Churches are independent establishments; and that the Church never was, and never was intended to be One, in that sense of the word Unity," which supposed them otherwise.[2] Now I do not produce this passage to form the text for a theological discussion, but in order to maintain that a system of philosophy, which admits of men believing in One Church, which yet they are to believe never was, and never was intended to be One, in any intelligible sense of unity, must be totally at variance with the philosophy which belongs to that class of mankind of whom we are unfolding the intellectual history.

[1] De Finibus, lib. II, 5.

[2] Part XX, p. 763.

I do not in this place engage to prove that men of chivalrous minds would reject such a theory as this; but I here maintain, that if they did receive it as truth, they would infallibly no longer express their belief in the words, "et unam, sanctam, catholicam, et apostolicam ecclesiam," but rather in such a sentence as this: "I believe in many independent Churches"; which, as experience proves, may contradict each other in every article of faith. Nor is it only to metaphysical abstractions, and to this mode of rendering unintelligible the most simple doctrines of the Christian religion, that the philosophy of chivalry will be opposed. Under the influence of Christianity, it will be delivered from the task of engaging in those numberless subtle disputations, relative to the duties and end of man, in which the ancient heroes, under the discipline of the heathen sophists, might have been often involved. In avoiding these interminable debates, heroic men would be guided by the instructions of the clergy. Dioscorus had written to St. Augustin, requesting that he would solve some difficulties which he found in the philosophical books of Cicero; and the holy bishop in his reply reminded him that these questions were neither a proper subject to occupy the attention of a bishop, nor a matter which could involve anything of importance to a Christian. "You have thought to surround or rather overwhelm me with a crowd of innumerable questions, from which I could not have extricated myself if I had enjoyed the utmost leisure. I wish to lead you away from the midst of your delicious inquiries, and even to abandon my own cares, that you may learn not to be so vainly curious, or that you may not henceforth dare to impose the office of feeding your curiosity upon those whose greatest care it is to bridle and repress the curious. How much better and more fruitful would it have been,

if, in your literary pursuits, you had rather endeavoured to cut off your vain and fallacious desires! which are so much the more to be avoided as they are more capable of deceiving, being veiled and adorned with I know not what shadow of humanity and title of liberal studies; for if all these dialogues are not to assist you with respect to the end and exercise of all your actions, what can they profit you? If you continue to prefer the Christian doctrine to all philosophy, as alone affording you the hope of eternal salvation, you have no need of understanding these discordant sentences. Nor is such a study necessary to enable you to maintain Christian truth against those who oppose it; for the knowledge of truth is sufficient of itself to condemn and overthrow all error whenever it is advanced, though it should never before have been heard of by you. Nam cognitio veritatis, omnia falsa, si modo proferantur, etiam quæ prius inaudita erant, et dijudicare et subvertere idonea est. Why should we even trouble ourselves with the articles professed by Donatists, or Maximians, or Manichæans, or Arians, or Eunomians, or Macedonians, or Cataphrygians, or other innumerable pests? And if to defend the Christian religion we are not obliged to know their errors, why should we trouble ourselves with what Anaximenes may have thought, reviving, cooking again that stale food for vain curiosity? Still, if it should be necessary, in order to defend truth, to understand the opinion of its adversaries, it is more important to study those of the heretics who call themselves Christians, than those of Anaxagoras and Democritus. Through the want of humility all the ancient philosophers erred from truth: it is humility which can alone lead you to it. There is no other precept to be given to those who seek it. Other vices are to be feared in sins; but pride is to be dreaded in acts

of virtue, lest, by the desire of praise, things praiseworthy should be lost.

"To this humility is greatly opposed that learning according to which we love to know what Anaximenes, what Anaxagoras, what Pythagoras, what Democritus thought, in order that we ourselves may be deemed learned; though such learning is in truth of no advantage to any real learning and wisdom; for what they held according to truth, we love, not because they held it, but because it was truth; and where they erred, their opinions will not assist us; since if we are men, it would rather become us to grieve that so many men of noble minds should have fallen into these errors, than to find subject of boasting and of vain declamation, to inflate those who are ignorant of them. How much better never to have heard the name of Democritus, than to know with grief that a person who was once esteemed great in his generation, should have thought that there were gods or images which flowed from solid bodies and filled the minds of men with a divine quality, to which they owed all their power of perception and thought! Therefore, since such is the blindness of men, in consequence of the darkness of sin, and the power of carnal desires, will you, or any one endowed with an attentive genius, suppose that any mode can be proposed to the human race more available to the attainment of truth, than that which induces us to yield to the ineffable and wonderful guidance of truth itself, so as to believe unto salvation what cannot be comprehended by human prudence? Of this glory we are the ministers; to this we encourage you to adhere with immutable constancy, by means of which not a few, but even whole nations, who cannot judge by reason, believe with faith, until, through the ministry of salutary precepts, they escape from those perplexities to the

aerial regions of purest and brightest truth; to which authority we ought to submit with so much the more devotion, as we observe that there is now no error which does not raise its head, and seek to collect to itself crowds of inexperienced persons, under cloak of the Christian name: those who are not within unity and Catholic communion, while they boast of the name of Christians, are attacking those who believe, and daring to traduce them as being ignorant, although our Lord came chiefly with this medicine, that the people might have faith: but to this attack they are impelled from a sense of their own abject state, if their authority were to be compared with Catholic authority; they endeavour, therefore, to overcome that most firm authority of the Church, as if with the name and promise of reason; for of all heretics, this temerity is as it were the rule: but the most clement Ruler of faith has fortified his Church by the consent of people and nations, and by that seat of the Apostles, that ark of authority; and hath armed a few learned and holy men, truly spiritual, with the most copious provisions of invincible argument: but it is the right discipline to receive as many as possible of the weak into the ark of faith, that while they are placed in safety, others may contend for them with force and courage."[1] It is, therefore, to the Church that the Christian chivalry will have recourse whenever it is called upon to state its views of philosophy; for, besides that it feels bound to revere its sublime authority, it is here that those charmed words are to be found which were so earnestly desired by the Thracian sage with whom Socrates conversed, as containing that medicine for the soul, of which the want is felt with such peculiar force by heroic men; and for the applica-

[1] S. Augustini Epist. ad Dioscorum, CXVIII.

tion of which no deep learning or attainments incompatible with the habits of heroic life are required, "docet enim omnes Deus qui audire volunt."[1] These are the words which have power to produce that unity which, St. Augustin says, "is the form of all beauty,"[2] conducting to that rhythm, as it were, and harmony, of which the whole life of man stands in need,[3] and presenting continually to men the great end and importance of all philosophy, convincing them that these do not consist in the perfection of the mechanical arts, in the extracting from matter everything that it can possibly yield, and all the enjoyment which the senses can demand from it; but reminding them that "truth is the greatest of all goods, which every man that would be happy ought to possess from the very beginning, in order that he may live as long as possible consorting with truth";[4] for principles of philosophy, as Berkeley observes of society in general, produce a greater effect upon the tone of men's minds, and therefore upon their happiness, than even philosophers are willing to suppose: and even the ancient philosopher saw the vanity of all philosophic research, which was not directed to the moderation of the desires, and to the conduct of life. Thus Maximus of Tyre says, "The soul of man is torn with passions; you behold an implacable and bitter contest; this is the war you should describe, not that of the Medes; relate the particulars of this distemper, and pass over the plague. Say, to whom shall I offer command and the office of healing; leave Hippocrates to look after bodies, and Themistocles to think of the sea; announce who is the physician of souls, who is the commander. If you should not find him among men,

[1] B. Esaiæ Abbat. Orat. VIII.
[2] Epist. XVIII, ad Cœlest.
[3] Plato, Protagoras.
[4] Plato, Leges, V.

have recourse to the gods. Talk not about countries laid waste, the sea covered with combatants, walls besieged, bodies perishing with disease;—these things are of little moment, these pass away."[1]

Again, it is clear that the philosophy which belongs to this spirit must always be connected with a belief in an especial providence, to ennoble its motives, and to support its courage in time of danger: witness the words of Cæsar to the fisherman:

Ne cessa præbere Deo tua fata.[2]

Cicero says that the immortal gods provide not only for the necessities of men in general, but also for those of each man in particular, extending their protection not only to whole continents and cities, but also to each of their inhabitants; so that such men as Curius, Fabricius, Metellus, Cato, Scipio, and Lælius, never rose to their great merit without the assistance of the gods. Hence it was, he continues, that the poets, and especially Homer, have been obliged to assign certain divinities to their heroes, in order to accompany them, and assist and protect them, in all their adventures, as in the case of Ulysses, Diomedes, Agamemnon, and Achilles. When the companions of Ulysses reject his advice, and praise the speech of Eurylochus, who proposes to land upon the Island of the Sun, Homer's expression is, then Ulysses knew that a divine power was adverse to him.[3] And that magnanimous disposition to regard men as the instruments of God to fulfil his great decrees, is finely represented in the dying words of Patroclus to Hector, "Rejoice now, Hector, for Jove has given you victory."[4] Homer says that Patroclus would have escaped death if he had followed the counsel of Achilles; but that the will of

[1] Dissert. XXVIII, 7.
[2] Lucan, lib. V.
[3] Od. XII, 294.
[4] Il. XVI, 844.

Jove is always stronger than that of man, and that it is Jove who dispenses victory.[1] The ancients did not think that it derogated from the glory of a hero to ascribe his victories to an over-ruling power. Sylla imputed all his success to fortune; thinking, says Plutarch, that such an opinion added an air of greatness and even of divinity to his actions. But the philosophy of our chivalrous romances was better: "God may fordoo well destiny," said King Pellinore to Merlyn, when the latter predicted his fate.[2] To the objections against this faith arising both from an erroneous estimate of happiness, from an unworthy conception of the Deity, and from an imperfect observation of the natural order of events, the heroic part of mankind, in all ages, have opposed themselves. Xenophon records the argument of Socrates in combating Aristodemus, who held an opinion like that of the modern sophists, that the Deity was above condescending to take any interest in the affairs of man.[3] What a magnificent passage is that in the Electra of Sophocles, where the chorus exclaims to one who beheld in despair the prosperity of the wicked!

θάρσει μοι, θάρσει, τέκνον·
ἔτι μέγας οὐρανῷ
Ζεὺς, ὃς ἐφορᾷ πάντα καὶ κρατύνει.

And with what force and majesty does the genius of Demosthenes proclaim this truth to the despondING Athenians! "Truly, O Athenians, I should regard Philip as a most formidable and overwhelming adversary, if I beheld him acting justly; but it is not possible, O Athenians, that a power should be permanent, which is marked with injustice and perjury and falsehood."[4]

[1] Il. XVI, 688.
[2] Morte d'Arthur, I, 88.
[3] Mem. lib. I, c. 4.
[4] Olynth. I.

Polyænus, in his book on stratagems, produces the instance of the misfortunes and failure of the Persians, after they had treacherously broken their treaty with the Greeks, as an instance to prove how justice may be policy, even in the lowest sense of the term; a principle which rendered the Corinthians so anxious on one occasion to convince the Lacedæmonians, that they who were about to encounter the power of Sparta had not been the first to break the truce.[1] Xenophon seems to have had a particular regard to this great maxim, when he reminded the Greeks of the sacrilege which had been committed by the enemy;[2] and Homer ascribes the same argument to Agamemnon, in encouraging the Greeks:[3] it was urged by the counsellors of Philip of Macedon, in advising him to renew the treaty with the Romans;[4] and it furnished Themistocles with an explanation of the victory of Salamis.[5]

There can be no doubt but that this belief in a moral retribution even in the present life, admitting that there were difficulties in the way of perfectly discerning its operations in every instance, was characteristic of heroic antiquity,[6] as it will ever be of the chivalrous spirit; that spirit which led the contemporaries of Edward IV to remark, that this usurper, when he landed in England to dethrone Henry VI, disembarked at Ravenspur, the very place where Henry IV had landed to dethrone Richard II, and which appeals in every age to the evidence of history to confirm this important lesson,—that, sooner or later, punishment is sure to be visited on the guilty; that vice is never without its penalty, and, with most wonderful exactness, its peculiar penalty; nor virtue without the reward which is

[1] Thucyd. I, 123. [2] Anab. III, 2. [3] Il. IV, 236.
[4] Livy, lib. XLII, 42. [5] Herodot. VIII, 109.
[6] Plato de Legibus, IV, 10. Plutarch de Fort. Roman. et de sera Numinis Vindicta.

proper for it to receive:—"Nec sine pœna unquam esse vitia, nec sine præmio virtutes."[1] From what has been shewn respecting the facility with which the sacred truths of the Christian religion are imparted to the generous and noble spirit of chivalry, we might infer at once that the philosophy which would generally belong to it would be in a high degree characterized by a devout feeling. It is the generous and heroic man, rather than the sophist, who is prepared to believe those celebrated sayings of antiquity, that a man possesses nothing but his soul, and that the greatest good at which he can arrive in the world is to please its Author; that piety to heaven is even essential to the magnanimity of a nation;[2] that all must in the first instance be convinced of the existence of a divine power worthy of worship, as being the cause of all good to men, the words with which Zaleukos begins his laws;[3] that the spirit of reverence is a better inheritance than gold;[4] that the consideration of the parts of man's body must oblige us to ascribe it to God, and not to nature;[5] that God should be praised in the things we understand, and admired in those which we understand not;[6] that "a mortal nature could never rise to such greatness as to despise the force of animals of superior power, to pass over the sea, to build cities, to found states, to observe the heavens, and to behold the circles of the stars and the courses of the sun and moon, their times of rising and setting, their eclipses, and return of the equinoxes, and the solstices, and the pleiades, the winter and summer, the winds and the showers, and the destructive path of the lightning, and to immortalize the events of the world by monuments, unless there were indeed a divine spirit in the soul from

[1] Boethius, Consol.
[2] Diodorus, lib. XI, 72.
[3] Stobæi Florileg. II, 197.
[4] Plato, Leges, V.
[5] Galen, lib. V, de usu part.
[6] Plotinus de Prov.

which it possessed such knowledge; that, therefore, man passes not to death but to immortality, and that instead of experiencing a loss, he will become capable of pure enjoyment, independent of a mortal body, unalloyed and void of every uneasiness; that when once delivered from this prison, he will arrive where all things are without labour, without groans, without old age, where there is a constant peace and calm, a state of contemplation and of loving wisdom, in which one has not to address a multitude, but truth itself, which flows round on all sides."[1]

It is the heroic man who is the last to subside into that state of insensibility in which the children of pleasure are seen to become wholly forgetful of death. Sophocles, in one of his most inspired moments, seems to have expressed the deepest sense which belongs to the soul of chivalry. "Many things are wonderful, and nothing more wonderful than man: he can pass beyond the foaming sea, scudding through the waves as they roll around him; he wears away the wearied and inexhaustible earth, the highest of the goddesses, by means of the plough, which yearly turns it up by the strength of horses; and he catches also the tribe of any birds, casting lines round them, and all kinds of fierce beasts, and the race dwelling under the sea, with meshy well-woven nets; and by his artifice he entraps the wild beast traversing the deserts, and leads the shaggy-maned horse by the yoke round his neck, and the untamed bull of the mountains; and he learneth oratory and perception quick as the wind, and civil polity, and is able to extricate himself from every difficulty, to escape the being exposed to the air and keen hurtling showers of the barren and unsheltered hills; he comes upon nothing that shall occur without being able to extricate himself: from death alone

[1] Æschines, Socrat. de Morte.

he can effect no escape."[1] Therefore it is the heroic mind which is peculiarly sensible of the importance of providing for the moment when it will arrive, and of obeying that holy precept, "Disce nunc mori mundo, ut tunc incipias vivere cum Christo": therefore it is preserved from that last act of horror in the scene of a worldly life, which is able to sully all the lustre of its past glory, and to make its remembrance only a subject of shame and sorrow; when everything departs, and the dying man looks for the last time upon all that surrounds him,—his beautiful apartments, his precious furniture, his delicious gardens, which are all to forsake him, along with companions and friends, while he is about to embark alone on the sea of eternity; when the man of laws is introduced, who says to him, "Sir, whom do you leave to be your heir?" and he begins with a faltering voice to utter these sad words, "I leave—I leave—I leave my lands—I leave my castle—I leave my furniture—I leave my revenues—I leave my silver plate—I leave all—" "And what do you leave to your soul?" asks St. Augustin, "quid animæ tuæ relinquis?" It is the man who is free from all immoderate attachment to the meaner interests of the world who desires to repeat the prayer of Socrates for his friend, that ἁπλῶς πρὸς Ἔρωτα μετὰ φιλοσόφων λόγων τὸν βίον ποιῆται·[2] and as far as regards himself, "that he may be beautiful within, and that what he has external may be favourable to what is within";[3] who would feel the beauty of the very word 'philosophy,' as expressing not the possession but the love and desire of wisdom. It is the simple and heroic man, void of the intellectual pride which seeks distinction by new and singular opinions, who in every age escapes the infection of the sophist's impiety: it is from him rather than

[1] Soph. Antigone, 332. [2] Plato, Phædrus. [3] Id.

from the learned disputant that words like these of Plato proceed—"I say to you, it is a thing incredible that there should be gods, and yet it is most true";[1] or like those of the Athenian, related by Plato—"I affirm that it is neither a human nor a divine impulse which moves you to speak irreverently of the gods, and to violate their temples, but a certain fury, growing naturally in man from ancient and unexpiated crimes, hurrying you on, which you should strive to escape from with all your strength; learn, then, how you may escape from it: when any of these opinions come into your mind, fly to the expiatory sacrifice, fly a suppliant to the temples of the gods who avert evil, fly to the society of good men, and there hear, and endeavour yourself to say, that what is just and good ought to be honoured by all men; but fly without looking back from the company of the wicked; and if after thus acting, you should find that the disease is removed, it is well; but if otherwise, esteeming it better to die, depart from life."[2] And again, to any one who is tempted to doubt the existence of the gods, he would speak with mildness as follows—"O boy, you are young; but as you advance, time will cause you to hold opinions the very opposite from those which you now esteem. Wait, then, that you may be able to judge of the greatest things; but the greatest is that which you now hold to be nothing; that upon the right opinion concerning the gods depends your living well or not. And first, if I were to suggest one great matter, I should not err from truth. Neither you alone, nor your friends, are the first to have this opinion concerning the gods, for there have been always some men more or less who laboured under this disease; but what happened to many of them I will relate: not one of them receiv-

[1] Theages. [2] De Legibus, IX.

ing from youth this opinion concerning the gods, that they are not, persevered unto old age in holding the same; but the other two diseases, namely, that there are gods, but that they care not for men, or that they care for men, but are to be bribed by gifts of wicked men, have indeed continued with a few men through their whole life. Be persuaded then by me, to wait before you determine on such subjects, and in the mean time do not dare to think impiously of the gods."[1]

Friedrich Schlegel even ascribes to the circumstance of men of a chivalrous and noble spirit having taken a part in the ancient literature, the characteristic greatness of thought and expression which belonged to it, when men learned to treat of everything and to judge of everything as if they were all animated with the dignified spirit of nobility. It was the possession of such a philosophy which rendered Pericles so powerful and renowned; for Thucydides says, that "in consequence of the opinion of his superior integrity, he restrained the multitude, and rather led the multitude than was led by it, not being involved in the necessity of always speaking to please the people, but having power, from this moral dignity, to oppose them."[2] Those who are familiar with the writings of men who were remarkable for their spirit of chivalry, will likewise observe what Cicero describes as characteristic of the eloquence of Scaurus, a certain natural authority entitled to much greater faith than any learning or ability whatsoever.[3] But we must not remain longer in this academic grove. There remain, however, two important remarks to offer, and when these are stated we may depart. In the first place, when it is affirmed that a certain

[1] Plato de Legibus, X. [2] Lib. II, 65.
[3] Brutus, 29.

philosophy belongs to the chivalrous part of mankind in all ages, it is not meant to imply that every man possessing this spirit is a philosopher in the ordinary acceptation of the term, or that he has a clear idea of the theories which characterize the school to which he belongs; it is not to be supposed that every man who adopts this philosophy is conscious of having so done, or that he can express to others the principles which govern his own mind; on the contrary, the generality of such men are incapable of forming any such ideas. Achilles could no more explain the principles of chivalry than Thersites could understand from what cause he had derived the qualities of a base and scornful churl. But of far less importance is the ability to establish noble principles in argument than the sentiment which gives them existence and action in life: it is this sentiment and this action which are ascribed to the spirit of chivalry. I have only endeavoured to shew, in the language of philosophy, what are the movements of that heart which is obedient to what may be considered both as the light of a primal revelation and the uncorrupted propensity of the original nature of man's soul, upheld and guided by a greater or less degree of divine power; for of the nature and extent of these high principles, of the language in which they may be expressed, and even of their very existence, men of heroic souls may have known nothing; but, as Cicero says of the resemblance between the Roman Catos and Scipios and the Lycurguses and Solons of Greece, our chivalrous youth and the great doctors of the Christian philosophy may yet be fellow disciples, "non tam fortasse docti, sed impetu mentis simili et voluntate."[1] Heroic men may be obnoxious, therefore, in some respects to the charge

[1] De Oratore, III, 15.

which Sophocles brought against Æschylus, when he accused him of writing as if under the influence of drunkenness; for if he did what was right, he did it without knowing what he did: *καὶ γὰρ εἰ τὰ δέοντα ποιεῖ, φησὶν, ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰδώς γε.*[1]

The second of these concluding remarks may be still more worthy of attention, and will yield a crowning evidence to confirm the justice of the whole position, that there is a philosophy belonging to the chivalrous spirit. Socrates says that "from early youth one can discern whether the mind be formed for philosophy or not":[2] and in almost the last page of the Phædrus he speaks of the youth Isocrates as having a certain philosophy in the nature of his mind; of whom he therefore predicts great things. It would appear, according to these views, that there is a certain disposition and tone of mind, independent of all opinions and all abstract principles, required for the reception of true philosophy. On the other hand, it is easy to shew that where a contrary system of opinions and principles to those which have been proved to be congenial to the generous part of human nature is instilled into the mind, the result is always more or less a premature decay of the qualities and virtues which belong to youth; that is, of the spirit which belongs to chivalry, which we have before seen is in a manner identical with youth. "When I see any of these sophisms," says a hero of the old poet, "I depart more than a year older than I was before":

ὅταν τι τούτων τῶν σοφισμάτων ἴδω,
πλὴν ἢ 'νιαυτοῦ πρεσβύτερος ἀπέρχομαι.[3]

It is not a poetical fancy, but an actual fact, which may be verified by daily observation, that the phi-

[1] Stobæi Florileg. I, 367. [2] De Repub. lib. VI, 278.
[3] Aristoph. Ranæ.

losophy which now so generally prevails has a tendency to blast all intellectual and moral youth, and to make young men old; old in selfishness, in avarice old, in love of censure old, in suspicion old, in the general disbelief of all virtue old, and in the loss of all imagination, all sense of beauty, all reverence, and in the contempt of everything but money and power, like old men who have not escaped the degrading influence of a decayed and world-worn nature. Accordingly we may observe, that even in the ordinary language of life the period of youth is shortened: formerly men were in the age of poetry when now they are only fitted for the renovating inspiration of Bacchus, which Plato said was designed to support the last and decrepit stage of man's life; nay, they were in that age which could furnish Fra Angelico with countenances of such angelic grace, that Michael Angelo used to say he must have been in paradise to borrow them; when now they are only characterized by features which seem to denote a total degradation of nature, and a long-protracted slavery to the vilest passions that can assault the human breast. A time there was when it did seem a token of the angry gods to see children calculate, and now to behold them is evidence of an enlightened age! Pythagoras divided man's life inte four twenties; a boy twenty, a youth twenty, a man twenty, an old man twenty.[1] When to the conservative principles which were enjoyed by the ancients were added those belonging to that living philosophy which was imparted in the Christian revelation, the continuance of intellectual and moral youth may have been still farther extended; the mind was constantly refreshed with the dews of heaven; no error or passion destructive of beauty and innocence was suffered to gain strength; age

[1] Laert. in Pythag.

made no wrinkles in the heart; death's pale flag was not advanced there. But woe the while! our fathers' minds are dead, and now the hearts of men grow old before their limbs are well formed, and the principles of a false philosophy, leading to the abandonment of moral restraints, and destroying the sentiments of chivalry, have, beyond a doubt, abridged the period of youth, not merely in a moral and intellectual sense, but even with regard to the physical constitution of our nature.

XVIII. It is a common opinion with unlearned and superficial minds, that from whatever period chivalry may be traced, and how wide soever its pale extended, it must always be regarded as belonging to nobility, and exclusively attached to civil or aristocratical institutions. The view which has been already taken of the chivalrous spirit will probably have shewn the error of such a supposition; but it may be right to dwell in a more particular manner upon this point, before we proceed to speak of nobility and of the institutions to which it gave birth.

It has been shewn that chivalry is but a term to express the spirit and general disposition of mind which belong to the generous and heroic part of mankind in all ages of the world; consequently, no rank of society can be incompetent to possess it, though there may be occupations and modes of life in the higher as well as in the lower classes which would render its preservation extremely difficult. It is not to be denied, that when this generous spirit is accompanied with the outward splendour of nobility, it gives rise to an image of great majesty; but it is essential to remember that the grand distinction, which alone merits love and admiration, is wholly independent of that adventitious splendour, which, however it may adorn and assist, can never of itself constitute chivalry. Even the ancients

were ready to admit this position. Ἐλευθέρως δούλευε, δοῦλος οὐκ ἔσῃ, said Menander, as if he were addressing a page or esquire of later chivalry. Plato makes the Spartan say, καὶ καλλωπίζεσθαι χρὴ τῷ καλῶς δουλεῦσαι μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ καλῶς ἄρξαι.[1] Another philosopher was asked, who were noble; he replied, "those who despise riches and glory and pleasure and life."[2] Sophocles adopts the same principle. Persons of low birth may have noble minds, and may become noble:

——————— κἀξ ἀγεννήτων ἄρα
μῦθοι καλῶς πίπτουσιν· ἥδε γὰρ γυνὴ
δούλη μέν, εἴρηκεν δ' ἐλεύθερον λόγον.[3]

Plato even affirmed, that to know how to obey required as generous a disposition and as good an education as to know how to command. The renown and exaltation of Cicero, who speaks of himself as "homo per se cognitus,"[4] may be fairly weighed against the silly pride and jealousy of the nobles towards men of merit, which he describes.[5] And we know that even the Junian house looked upon L. Brutus, a plebeian, as the founder of its nobility. To be as noble as the king was the pride of Diomedes, when he said to Agamemnon,

σοὶ δὲ διάνδιχα δῶκε Κρόνου παῖς ἀγκυλομήτεω·
σκήπτρῳ μέν τοι ἔδωκε τετιμῆσθαι περὶ πάντων·
ἀλκὴν δ' οὔτοι δῶκεν, ὅ τε κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον.[6]

Without alluding to the great principles which were afterwards established by the Christian religion, it is obvious that these sentiments could only gain additional force and extent by the lapse of time, which always confirms the judgments of nature. We can behold in life as well as in history

[1] De Legibus, VI.
[2] Stobæi Florileg. III, 199.
[3] Sophocles, Trachiniæ, 61.
[4] Cat. I, 18.
[5] In Verrem, art. II, lib. V, 70, 71.
[6] Il. IX, 37.

and in poetry "how that genterie is not annexed to possession."

> For God it wot, men mournful often find
> A lordes sone do shame and vilanie.
> And he that wol hav pris of his genterie
> For he was boren of a gentil hous
> And had his elders noble and vertuous,
> And nill himselven do no gentil dedes,
> Ne folwe his gentil auncestrie that ded is,
> He n'is not gentil, be he duk or erl;
> For vilain's sinful dedes make a cherl.
> For gentillesse n'is but the renomee
> Of their auncestres, for ther high bountee,
> Which is a strange thing to thy persone:
> Thy gentillesse cometh fro God alone.
> Then cometh our veray gentillesse of grace;
> It was no thing bequeathed us with our place.

"The king may scatter titles and dignities, till lords, like the swarm of Dons in Sancho's Island, shall become as troublesome as so many flesh-flies; but he may not save those among whom he scatters them from rottenness and oblivion."[1] The king can give letters of nobility, but he cannot bestow the sentiment which gives it virtue: his favour cannot grant the inheritance which alone ennobles an illustrious birth; and his wrath cannot take it away. "The emperor," says St. Gregory the Great, "can make an ape be called a lion, but he cannot make him become one."[2]

> Princes and lords may flourish and may fade,
> A breath can make them, as a breath has made;

but the noble chivalry of the heart,

> Flos veterum virtusque virûm,

must be held as an inalienable privilege which is the gift of God alone. The Emperor Sigismund replied to a favourite who begged that he would

[1] Landor. [2] Lib. I, epist. 5.

ennoble him, "I can give you privileges and fiefs; but I cannot make you noble." "He who does not possess these virtues," says the poet Arnaud de Marvelh, "though he may have the name of chevalier, I do not regard him as a knight." As Talbot exclaims when he plucks off the garter from the "craven leg" of Falstaff:

> He then that is not furnished in this sort
> Doth but usurp the sacred name of knight,
> Profaning this most honourable order.

And Pierre Cardinal, the old poet of Provence, says, "the king of France is not so powerful that he can change a wicked man into a man of honour; he may give him gold and silver and robes and wine and viands; but as for goodness, God alone can impart that." He only who is himself free can make men free:

ἐλεύθερος γὰρ οὔτις ἐστὶ πλὴν Διός.[1]

The ancients, notwithstanding their immoderate regard for birth and nobility, were not altogether insensible to the stubborn facts which were against their theory. "Noble sons do not always spring from noble fathers, nor evil from evil," says Sophocles; "but there is no trusting," he adds, "to anything mortal."[2] Themistocles was able to make his son Cleophantus a good horseman; but he failed in every effort to make him a good man like himself. Aristides could not impart virtue to Lysimachus his son. Pericles had two sons, Paralus and Xanthippus, whom he made inferior to no Athenian in horsemanship and music, and in all gymnastic exercises; but he could make neither of them good men. Thucydides[3] spared no expense in the education of two sons, Melesia and Stephanus, who became equal

[1] Æschyl. Prometh. Vinct. 50. [2] Stobæus, lib. III, 20.
[3] The rival of Pericles, not to be confounded with the historian.

to the best of the Athenians in the games; but in the essential thing, virtue, they were both deficient.[1] The heir of Q. Fabius Maximus was disinherited by the sentence of the prætor, as being unworthy to enter into the fields of his glorious father: there were also degenerate sons to the Hortensian family. Young Scipio, the son of Africanus, was a fool and a prodigal. Marcus, the son of Cicero, to whom the latter dedicated his immortal work *De Officiis*, was a drunkard. Horace alludes to the infamous Lævinus, who was of the ancient Valerian family. Plutarch remarks that the wretched miser Perseus was not descended from any Lydian or Phœnician merchant, but that he was allied to Alexander and Philip. Commodus, educated with care, was the son of Marcus Antoninus; Constantine, Constantius, and Constans, were sons of Constantine the Great; Arcadius and Honorius were the weak and unhappy sons of the great Theodosius; Caligula and Agrippina were the children of Germanicus. What a shade of degeneracy is visible between John Ducas Vatazes and his son Theodore; between the founder, who sustained the weight, and the heir, who enjoyed the splendour of the imperial crown! Ottocar, king of Bohemia, was of more worth in his cradle than Wenceslaus, his son, when a bearded man. Philippe-le-bel was son of St. Louis; Charles II. of Naples was the son of Charles I.; James and Frederick were the sons of Peter III, of Aragon. No paladin was more renowned for heroic piety than Count Josselin, to whom succeeded a son infamous for drunkenness and luxury, who lost the principality, and died of hunger in the prisons of the Saracens.[2] Thus it is of human worth; and, as Dante says,

[1] Plato, Meno.

[2] Mar. Sanuti Tors. Secreta Fidel. Cruc. III, 15. Gesta Dei per Francos.

So ordains
He who bestows it, that as his free gift
It may be call'd.[1]

If we extend these reflections to later times, and view the actions of nobility with regard to those great religious duties which the Christian religion imposed upon it, and in the discharge of which alone can its consistency with that religion, as far as individuals are concerned, be maintained, we shall not be induced to dwell with greater pleasure upon the feelings connected with it, than when we confined our view to the sentiments and actions of classical antiquity. In the first age of Christianity it is certain, as indeed might have been foreseen by merely human wisdom, that not many persons of this class became converts. The earliest of the Christians seem to have hardly contemplated the possibility of a period arriving like that of the middle ages of the Church, when holy bishops, like St. Hugh of Burgundy, who lay enshrined in Lincoln, would have been borne to their graves by kings and by warriors, who were themselves holy. In the next book we shall take a general view of this most interesting and sublime history, and behold examples of sainted kings supported by devout nobility; but no one needs to be told that this belongs more to recollection than to experience: perhaps a future age may exhibit something similar to what was the first condition of Christians; perhaps it will be reserved for those to behold the triumph of the Church, who generously followed her through the obscurity and dangers of her infant state. To take a recent instance,—it was the nobility, however it might boast of illustrious exceptions, not the chivalry of France, which first deserted from the holy standard of the cross. "You attack religion, it is true; you ridicule

[1] Purgatory, canto VII.

priests, you disdain the Church, you treat her mysteries as a ceremony; yet do we appear offended? Do we not, on the contrary, adopt you as our philosopher, worthy of the court of the greatest monarch? But as for you who speak against our privileges, and presume to cast a reflection upon our nobility, why can you not imitate these masters of philosophy? why should you be thus morose, and savage, and fearful, opposed to all the first principles of good company?" This was the language of many princes and nobles to the contending disciples of the modern philosophy, of which the patriarch was a flatterer of the great. It was well said by the Abbé de la Mennais, that "the revolution was already accomplished at the epoch when it is generally supposed to have commenced. Men have mistaken putrefaction for death."[1] Nay, observe the succeeding stage in this history. Behold those pompous equipages which crowd the streets of the capital; those brilliant assemblies which seem to revive all the glories of political nobility. What a restoration is here! But turn to the other side and behold! The house of God remains a stable or a workshop; no great institution of religion is allowed to resume its offices of charity; no humble friar permitted to evangelise the poor; no children of St. Benedict to recommence their learned labours; no sons of St. Ignatius to afford a religious education to youth. Is this a restoration to refresh the soul of chivalry? to augment the lustre of noble titles? to make us forget the distinctions of nature? The moderns seem wholly ignorant of the wide distinction which exists in Catholic countries between the world and those who are living members of the Church of Jesus Christ. From the time of the Apostles even until the end of the world, there will have been always

[1] Nouveau Mélange, 1826.

within the Catholic Church, as St. Augustin says, "the two descriptions of men who correspond to the sheep and the goats in the divine parable; which must feed together until the Prince of Pastors shall come to separate them: nobis enim imperavit congregationem, sibi autem servavit separationem; quia ille debet separare, qui nescit errare."[1] The Church, therefore, resisted those innovators who called upon her to undertake this separation; she receives all; and although iniquity may seem to abound, and many false brethren give rise to perpetual danger; in this dreadful wreck of all noble virtues, in the very scenes of impiety and indifference, the most dreadful stage of impiety, there are always existing worthy members of the numerous and happy family of Catholic Christians, supported by their sublime faith, and practising all the duties of religion which belong to their station,—the holy priest, the generous father, the pious youth, the faithful domestic, the Christian in every walk and condition of life, and in every respect like the first and most perfect of the disciples of Jesus. But the question here is, did it still continue the distinguishing characteristic of the nobility of France, to have preserved this majestic character? I fear we shall chiefly find the Christian among the chivalry of nature, far from courts and the assemblies of the disdainful world, or present there only to serve and obey,—in the valleys of La Vendée, and not on the parades of the capital. If we turn to the history of England at the great crisis which was to fix her spiritual destiny, we shall find that the proper objects of all horrible dispraise were men invested with the titles and riches of nobility. This should have been no astonishment to Christians who remembered the judgment which our Lord has passed

[1] S. Augustin, ad Felic. Epist. CCVIII.

upon the rich. "Omnis dives aut iniquus est, aut heres iniqui," said St. Jerome; and Bourdaloue, after an attentive consideration of the objections which could be advanced against such a position, was obliged to arrive at the same conclusion.[1]

"It is rulers," says a great French writer, "who first cease to believe, and irreligion sets out from the centre of power, to spread itself by degrees through the lower classes. More attached to their faith, from having fewer motives to wish that it may be false, the common people for a long time resist the influence of the higher ranks; they defend their faith with their conscience, and while attacked by wit and false reasoning, and outraged by repeated examples of daring impiety, they form for themselves a sacred barrier at the bottom of their hearts, to secure their consolations and their hopes." They are the last to admit those monstrous and impious plans which shock equally common sense and all the principles of Christianity,—which divide the children of mixed marriages, by training some to receive as truth what others are to protest against as error; which establish schools in which religion is to be excluded, or in which students of all religions are to be admitted, leading not only to indifference, but to blasphemy and sacrilege. "As for political nobility," says Bartolommeo Arnigio in his Vigils, "there are many in its ranks who take upon them to censure and oppose the holy Church, and to countenance the adversaries of the Catholic doctrine, or else who seem to take no interest in the divine service, to have no devotion to churches and holy places, and no zeal for the honour of God."[2] They repair to the church as the Jews of old came to Bethany to the house of Martha and Mary; not on

[1] Serm. sur les Richesses.

[2] Les Veilles de Barthel. Arnigio, traduites de l'Italien: Troyes, 1608, p. 12.

account of Jesus alone, but also that they might see Lazarus.[1] They treat venerable priests as if they were their lackeys, and seem to be quite above the humble manifestations of faith which are practised by the generous poor; such men are not well taught in the school of Jesus Christ, who says, "Learn of me, who am mild and humble," not externally, like the hypocrite, but "of heart." Abel, he continues, came into the world to teach innocence, Enoch purity, Abraham faith, Isaac holiness, Joseph gratitude, Moses clemency, Joshua valour, Job patience, but Jesus Christ to place humility as the foundation of all virtue. How hard is it for the rich to glory in being brought low,[2] for the great to preserve their own greatness by heroic humility, without which they are condemned, and for ever lost! "I should have a soul as base as yours if I did not feel the dishonour which you have thrown upon my house," wrote the father of St. Stanislaus Kostka, to that holy child. "My reputation calls upon me to make all Europe resound with my resentment; that every one may know, that though I have a son who has traversed Germany and Italy on foot like a beggar, in order to embrace a profession unworthy of his birth, I am not so weak as to leave unpunished actions so base and disgraceful to my name." Here we can behold the blindness of such men, who, through a wicked pride in the nobility of their house, are often the great causes of its decline and ruin. If the blessed Stanislaus had followed the intentions of his father, no one now would ever hear of his house, which has long since been extinct in Poland; it is this saintly youth who has immortalised its memory, and has rendered the name of Kostka celebrated, as we now witness it, in every region of

[1] De Imitat. Christi, III, 33.

[2] S. Jac. Epist. I.

the world.[1] The riches and pomp of this worldly grandeur have a tendency to deprive the soul of its wings; all the thoughts of these men are of worldly honour; it is among them that its principles have the deepest root. And yet such principles are totally opposed to all which inflames with noble ardour the mind of youth and chivalry. It is this proud, artificial, or legal nobility, which chiefly contains the men who, like the Jews, seek honour one from the other, and not that which comes from God only.[2] All their ambition is to obtain places of civil power for themselves, and to use it, not for God's honour, but for their own advantage, forgetting that, as the noble Arnigio says, it is absolutely necessary either to reject the doctrine of Jesus Christ, or to renounce this false glory. Who can serve Jesus Christ and this kind of honour? Certainly no man. It is in vain that they try to persuade themselves that they are still Christians: "Le professeur de l'honneur mondain se moque de Jésus-Christ et de ses préceptes." That is the whole truth; while they only pretend to explain his doctrine in a high, spiritual sense. Why should the Christian chivalry seek to identify itself with men who only want occasions when hell itself breathes out contagion to this world, to become its very chosen instruments? so that to each of them may be applied the words of the hermit to Sir Mordrec: "Tu feras plus de maulx en ung jour que tout ton parentage ne fist oncques de bien en toute sa vie."[3] Or who use the same rather as an excuse for pride, to proffer an insulting patronage, than for an excitement to generous devotion; who seem to think that they confer a great favour upon God by not openly deserting the holy faith of their ancestors, and that

[1] Vie de St. Stanislas Kostka.
[2] Luis of Granada, Catechism, part III, 3.
[3] Lancelot du Lac, XXIII.

the Church, illustrious through so many ages with all the treasures and glories of intellectual greatness, may be proud of having their empty titles to add to the lustre of her crown. The only answer that such boasters merit from those with whom they are too proud to serve, is that breathing the very soul of chivalry, which assures them they may fly—

> φεῦγε μάλ', εἴ τοι θυμὸς ἐπέσσυται· οὐδέ σ' ἔγωγε
> λίσσομαι εἵνεκ' ἐμεῖο μένειν· παρ' ἔμοιγε καὶ ἄλλοι,
> οἵ κέ με τιμήσουσι· μάλιστα δὲ μητίετα Ζεύς.[1]

On the other hand, when did the pure and noble mind of chivalry ever harbour such a thought as that which political nobility has sometimes been known to express,—that men of honour might adhere to a religion which they believed to be false, from a principle of honour, and that when it was no longer condemned by legislative enactments, they would condescend to range themselves on the side of truth, and to make peace with God? Can honour be a sentiment which would prompt men to continue through life attesting a most horrible falsehood, deceiving the whole world excepting a few confidential companions, employing their whole influence to keep men in error, to distract the heart of their country by useless divisions, to proclaim themselves as the enemies of truth and virtue, and of every measure which is to impart to mankind just notions of God, and to transmit this horrible devotion to their children, as long as their private vanity and personal pique are in the least excited by those who would lead them to knowledge and happiness? Nobility which has such thoughts does well to spell honour in a new way. May it long preserve its modern orthography! It is only to be wished that it might acquire fresh distinctions, which would

[1] Il. I, 173.

keep it distinct from the society of men of noble and generous natures!

We have seen that the spirit of chivalry is favourable to receiving the impressions of religion; whereas we are assured by holy men, that riches and nobility may be among obstacles to salvation.[1] "Rich young people," they say, "are frequently more vicious than others. We see them addicted to pleasure, slothful, and averse to labour; their minds always taken up with vanity, aspiring after greatness, fortune, and the riches of the world, proud, presumptuous, despising others, speaking with haughtiness, ('dives effabitur rigide,'[2]) intractable, and resisting the most salutary instruction, subject to much vice, oftentimes malicious and ingenious in committing sin: and, on the contrary, we see young persons of low condition or small fortune live in the fear of God, desirous of securing their salvation and advancing in virtue; laborious, seeking good instructions, and receiving them with joy and much fruit, flying from sin, or recovering instantly if they happen to fall into it; and by this means they heap the blessings of God upon themselves; for God is pleased to favour the humble and those who fear him, as, on the contrary, he rejects the proud and those that trust in their own strength, and glory in the multitude of their riches."[3] "To number nobility," they continue, "among the obstacles of virtue, were to offer an injury to it; yet we shall not deviate from truth, if we say that the ill conduct of persons of rank is a great impediment to their salvation: they affect so much pride, that they contemn all the world, and esteem all others infinitely below them." They contrive that the poor should not approach them even in the house

[1] Bourdaloue sur les Richesses. [2] Prov. XXV.
[3] Gobinet's Instruction of Youth, 105.

of God; though, in spite of their heartless maxims of worldly prudence, the Church loves to smile rather upon the poor than upon them. "They are slaves to ambition; they are extravagantly effeminate, envious, attached to self-interest, unjust, violent, harsh, and often cruel towards others, especially their inferiors; impatient, passionate, revengeful. What a life is this for men who make profession of the Christian religion! What advantage to be great before men, and contemptible in the sight of God! to command others, and to be a slave to vice and to his own passions! to be prosperous in this world, and of the number of those who will eternally cry out, 'What hath pride profited us, or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All these things have passed away like a shadow: therefore we have erred from the way of truth.'" "That is a wicked gentility," says St. Augustin, "which makes you contemptible in the sight of God by its pride."[1]

It would ill accord with simplicity and truth to imitate the passion of those modern sophists whose works are characterised by the attempt to invest vulgar personages with an air of solemnity, and to ennoble whatever seems degraded by nature and the common judgment of mankind.[2] I desire not to avail myself of "the secret of the modern jacobinical drama, and of all its popularity, which consists in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things in their causes and effects, in the excitement of surprise, by representing the qualities of generosity, refined feeling, and a high sense of honour, in persons where experience teaches us least to expect them."[3] The wise moralist of

[1] Serm. 27.

[2] Plato, Leges, III. Demosthenes *περὶ τῆς παραπρεσβείας*. Æschines Socrat. de Morte.

[3] Coleridge's Biograph. Lit. vol. II, 271.

antiquity remarks, as an instance of Homer's profound knowledge of men, and to exemplify the instruction which may be derived from his poetry, that Achilles, though in anger, addresses Agamemnon with respect, while Thersites reproaches him with insult; and that Calchas, the false prophet, who courts the favour of the multitude, without scruple reviles him as the cause of the plague, while Nestor endeavours to prevent the evil without appearing to accuse him.[1] And yet my conclusion from the whole must be, that the nobility of convention, although in some respects an institution of all ages, has not necessarily any exclusive connection with chivalry; and that when this generous spirit is banished from it, the admiration and respect of men must be transferred along with it to the nobility of nature, in whatever condition of life it may be found; to the qualities which carry with them their own dignity; to those which belonged to what our Saxon ancestors called knighthood, which meant only the state of youth. And who knows in how obscure a rank we may then discover "le plus vaillant écuyer qui oncques en son temps chaussa éperons blancs?"

There are times when the pride of emblazonment and ancestral crests must give place to love for that rural chivalry which preserves the noble sentiments that may no longer be found in the courts of princes. There is extant a discourse which was delivered by the Abbé Fauchet in the church of Surenne, on the 10th of August, 1788, on occasion of the fête of the rose, which consisted in the presentation of a garland of roses to whoever was adjudged, by a council of old men, the most perfect of the village maidens. It had been devised by a venerable priest, and down to the time of the Revolution it had retained all the

[1] Plutarch de Audiendis Poetis.

innocence and beauty of its original institution. "At this moment," says the sacred orator, "when all Europe is convulsed, and every country of the world hears the rumour of war; when internal dissensions are fermenting on all sides, and threatening our country with agitations such as perhaps have never been heard of,—how sweet is it to find ourselves united in this peaceable valley, in this ancient village, in this holy sanctuary, in presence of a princess who has no ambition but that of peace and goodness, among these good old men and these young and ingenuous maidens, these youthful peasants, to whom a crown of vine-leaves imparts a pleasure which neither jewels nor a diadem can secure to princes! How sweet is it to participate in this pure joy of the country, in the pomp of this rustic triumph, this virginal fête, this pastoral celebration, in these lists of rural simple chivalry! It was thus in the ancient world, when there were patriarchs who were at once kings and shepherds. Chivalry was then in the tents of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel; not in the palaces of Ninus, Sesostris, and Sardanapalus: hospitable Sara receives angels under the leafy pavilion; chaste Rebecca is presented with a chaplet at the fountain's side; Rachel reigns as a mother over the pastures of Jacob; and the knightly David, armed with his shepherd's sling, is able to overcome the formidable Goliath. Under the palms of Mount Ephraim the wise Deborah pronounces the sentences of justice, and gives the signal of victory; under the oak of Ephra, Gideon is proclaimed by Heaven the most valiant of men, and receives the divine mission to be the deliverer of his brethren. Behold the harvest-repasts of Bethlehem; and confess that heroic manners are not confined to Palladian halls. Here, too, you witness ancient simplicity, sweet good nature, the delightful union of rich and poor, that general fraternity, that mutual

communication of affectionate sentiments, that confidence in virtue, that respect for modesty, that fidelity to holy laws, that blessed alliance, that chaste joy. There, as in the courts of Charlemagne and St. Louis, are found nature, patriotism, and religion; religion which sanctifies nature, and which crowns patriotism." Leaving the people of God for the scenes of profane history, we still may look for chivalry under the circumstances of rural life. We may repair to the meadows and groves of Arcadia, leaving the brilliant Athens and the proud and severe Lacedæmon. It is from the plough that Cincinnatus is called to command the Romans. But when the holy religion of Christians has been extended to these simple companions of nature, what perfection is then to be expected from them! what a horror of vice! what a love of duty! what fidelity! what generosity! what honour! what devoted chivalry! The old peasant, the young shepherd, the good mother, the ingenuous maiden, represent all the personages of this simple court, where thrift does not follow fawning; but where is there greater majesty and more perfect grace, nobler heroism, and purer love? There the banks of rivers re-echo the hymns of the Church, amidst the gentle sounds of nature; and at the tolling of the cloister-bell, all hearts are raised to heaven, and every tongue salutes the Virgin Mother, and adores the mystery of love. All that can nourish genuine sentiments of Christian chivalry may be found there. The august solemnities of the Church—the cross borne in triumph along with holy banners, the inspiring lessons of faithful pastors, and the sweetest chants of innocence; the social banquet prepared for holydays, when smiles are still more amiable, and souls more open to cheerfulness and peace; the tranquillising songs of the evening choir in the house of God, then the burst of final rejoicing; the games where inno-

cence presides, and rural chivalry contends for the praise of its dear familiar circle; before whose palms, perhaps, the lustre of maturer conquerors will be seen to fade,—for these are obliged to look back to nature and simplicity for their best reward, as when Epaminondas declared it was the chief happiness of his life that his father and mother lived to witness his victory at Leuctra. Countless passages might be produced from the annals and instructions of chivalry, to shew that there is nothing in this view which does not harmonise with its spirit. Witness St. Louis, the father of peasants, the friend of rural labourers, the pastoral judge; Charlemagne, who on ordinary days used to wear the dress of a peasant, whose palaces were like vast farm-houses, whose courtiers were saints and pastors of the people; Henry IV. of France, who was brought up like a shepherd lad among the simple inhabitants of mountains, and who seemed always at home when he was at the peasant's cheerful hearth. Justice, piety, and every affection of the heroic mind, would be willing to adopt the Castilian maxim, that "every man is the son of his own works;" so that when a man performs any heroical enterprise, or any virtue, or any extraordinary work, then is he new-born and named the son of his own actions, and so becomes an hidalgo "of a suffycyente gentyl lynage;" a doctrine which is beautifully expressed in the Tabula Genealogica of the family of Löwenstein, which was written by Johann Ludwig von Löwenstein in the year of Christ 1200, and placed in the family archives. The genealogical table of this noble house begins with these words—"Satis antiqua, si posteri clari sint virtutibus et bonitate morum. Ille enim apud Deum præest potior, non quem nobilitas sæculi, sed quem devotio fidei et sancta vita commendat." This is the doctrine of Catholic nobility, which fully admitted the maxim of the ancients, "Nemo sibi

parentes aut patriam eligere potest, at ingenium moresque sibi quisque potest fingere." All other principles, when exclusively maintained, argue, as Plato would say, γραῶν ὕθλον—they are only concerned about a shadow: now, as Petrarch says, "I wish to embrace the truth, and to let the shadow pass."

"The greatest nobility," says Bartolommeo Arnigio, in his Vigils, "is that which is natural or divine, which may belong to him who walks barefooted in rags; whereas he who is without it, though clothed in purple and gold, must be ignoble, et très vilain."[1] "The true and only nobility," says the golden tongue of St. John Chrysostom, "is to perform the will of God. This is the nobility of the apostolic order; and he who is illustrated by the Holy Spirit is ennobled with the sovereign and highest nobility." There is, moreover, a natural nobility which consists in peculiar generosity and excellence of soul;[2] and this also may be found in the lowest ranks of human life. Witness Chaucer's peasant, who lived in peace and perfect charity, loving God with all his heart, whether prosperous or in calamity, and his neighbour as himself; who also would work,

> For Christe's sake, for every poure wight
> Withouten hire, if it lay in his might.

Chaucer's stately knight joins the company of pilgrims, many of whom were persons of the lowest degree, but they all ride lovingly together; and when the lot falls on the knight which requires him to tell the first tale, with a right merry chere he consents, and welcomes the lot in God's name which imposes on him the obligation to amuse this party of yeomen and foresters.

[1] Les Veilles de Barthelemy Arnigio, traduites de l'Italien: Troyes, 1608. [2] Id. p. 21.

John of Gaunt, duke of Aquitaine, used to play upon a common with rustic youths. The great noblemen of England used often to entertain the poor at table upon days of festivity, when bonfires were lighted before their castle-gates. The noble Italian, Arnigio, shews how truly generous and heroic peasants and men of the lowest rank of life may become. "The glorious nativity of the Redeemer of the world," he observes, "was revealed to shepherds, as to men pure, just, and vigilant. The poor are members of the city of God, of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. When our adorable Saviour was to be born, blessed Mary and the devout Joseph were so little possessed of worldly grandeur, that the stable of an inn was their only place of refuge;" "for, mark," says a holy man, "the Evangelists do not say that there was no room in the inn, but that there was no room for them." Oh, what a noble school is poverty! what a temple of sovereign honour!

These sentiments were not suffered to waste their strength in mere speculation and discourse; they were drawn out into action by chivalry. "Inferior mortals there are," says the knight of La Mancha, so well versed in the lore of chivalry, "who aim at knighthood, and strain to reach the height of honour; and high-born knights there are, who seem fond of grovelling in the dust, and being lost in the crowd of inferior mortals. The first raise themselves by emulation or by virtue; the last debase themselves by negligence or by vice."

The proud Infantes of Carrion held that men of such station as themselves were not well married with the daughters of Ruydiaz of Bivar, and for that reason they forsook them, because they came not of blood sufficiently high for them: but the kings of Aragon and of Navarre thought differently; they sent letters to King Don Alfonso and to

the Cid Campeador, wherein these kings sent to ask those same daughters of the Cid in marriage for the Infantes of Aragon and of Navarre. So, instead of being wives of the sons of counts, they became wives of the sons of kings, and afterwards queens. In our beautiful poem of the Beggar's Daughter of Bednall Green, it is the knight who refuses to examine "the weight of the purse," while the merchant and the innholder disdain the connexion. If we turn to ancient history we find the same sentiments and reflections, supported by similar facts. Philosophy did not receive Plato noble, but it ennobled him. Cleanthus used to water gardens for hire. Pythagoras was son of a silversmith, Euripides of a gardener, Demosthenes of a cutler, Virgil of a potter. "Les hommes vils et de peu," says Arnigio, "ne descendent pas tousjours d'un bas lignage." Nor do noble youths always spring from a noble line: Pericles was born from a wicked family; and Strabo, the father of Pompey the Great, was trampled upon by the Roman people through hatred for his crimes. If such men could spring from vicious sources, what absurdity would it have been to discourage youth of virtuous though humble origin from aspiring to receive noble palms!

Letters and arms both afforded opportunity for generous efforts to young men of the lowest rank. The poetic annals of the middle ages can supply numberless instances of the renown which attended such exertion. Bernard de Ventadour, born in the castle of Ventadour in Limousin, was the son of a servant; Guillaume de Cabestaing, in Roussillon, though noble, was without an estate; Giraud le Roux, born at Toulouse, was the son of a poor man; Rambaud de Vaqueiras, the son of Peirols, in the principality of Orange, was without fortune; Peyrols d'Auvergne, of the castle of Peyrols, at the

foot of Roquefort in Auvergne, was in similar circumstances; Cadenet, whose father's castle of Cadenet, on the Durance, had been rased to the ground by the Toulousans in 1165, was left destitute; Perdigon was son of a poor fisherman of l'Esperon; Berenger de Palasol, of Roussillon, was without fortune; Hugues de Saint Cyr, in le Querci, whose father's castle had been destroyed in the wars, was left a burden on his relations; Arnaud Daniel, of the castle of Ribeyrac in Périgord, was poor; Guillaume Adhémar was a poor knight of Marvejol; Guibert Amiels, a poor knight of Gascony; Richard de Barbésieu, a poor knight of Saintonge; Arnaud de Tintignac, a poor knight of Provence. It need hardly be shewn that the Church attended to no privileges of birth and nobility in her distinctions: Pope John XXII was a poor shoemaker's son; Nicholas V was son of a poulterer; Sixtus V of a swineherd; Pope Urban IV was so little ashamed of being the son of a shoemaker, that he ordered the pulpit of the church of St. Urbain at Troyes, his native city, to be adorned on great festivals with tapestry representing his father's stall. In arms too, according to the sentiment of the romances (and even to the practice of the middle ages,—for Robert Knolles, the most celebrated English leader in Edward III's wars, after the Black Prince and Chandos, was of very obscure extraction), it was chivalry not nobility which conferred the greatest honour.

When Arthur proved himself able to achieve the trial of the sword, which no one else could draw from the stone, he was elected king of Great Britain, though all looked upon him as a "berdless boy, that was come of lowe blood."[1] And when Wolfdietrich, in the Book of Heroes, had

[1] Morte d'Arthur, I, 11.

defeated Count Hermann of Tuscany, who had upbraided him for joining the company of high-born knights when he was poor and apparently of low rank, the author of the poem makes him become the husband of the noble princess.[1]

In real history, too, chivalry is to be sought for in the ranks of the Swiss mountaineers and peasants, rather than in those of their imperial invaders; in the poor and unprovided followers of Sobieski the Pole, not among the ceremonious and ungrateful courtiers of Vienna. The soldiers of Pavia were more noble than their Emperor Frederick II, when they remonstrated against his barbarous execution of the Parmesan prisoners; saying they were come to fight the Parmesans, but armed and in the field of battle, not to serve them for executioners. There is even an example of legislation on the principle of the romances which places chivalry before nobility; for the state of Pistoja, in the thirteenth century, ennobled men as a punishment for their crimes. But besides these grounds, which may be rejected as fanciful, it would not be difficult to bring forward others, from the severest principles of truth, to prove that there is, after all, a more practical, direct, and secure mode of extending the noble spirit of chivalry than by any legislative or conventional decree. It is the sublime faith and the holy discipline of the Catholic Church which can enable the soul of man to gain the highest degree of elevation of which it is capable in its present state of exile; it is religion which can impart real magnanimity and gentleness to the lower classes, so as to make the most poor and obscure of men susceptible of all the generous and lofty sentiments which belong to true nobility.

In the little book entitled "Recollections of St.

[1] Book II, Adventure VI.

Acheul" there is an account of the life and death of one of the young students, Jean-Baptiste Carette, whose parents were in such abject poverty, that their son, having excited the attention of a worthy priest, had been supported solely by the alms of charitable Christians, and sent to the college of the Jesuits at their expense. Here he evinced, during his short but brilliant career, for he died in his eighteenth year, not only the highest talents, but a certain nobleness and purity of sentiments, "which," adds the writer, "are not always found among those of the highest society." It was the custom at this college for the students to pass one day in the country every month, during the summer season; and Carette would employ these days allotted for enjoyment in visiting his parents in their poor cottage. It was on one of these occasions that he was suddenly seized with the illness which removed him from the world. As soon as the news arrived at the college of his being unable to return, the Director of the Congregation of the Holy Angels, of which he was a member, hastened to visit him. He found him in a miserable cabin, lying upon straw, which was spread upon some loose planks, supported by stones. The pious youth, who remarked his affliction on beholding him in such a state, said to him, "O father, how good it is to submit to the will of God!" The holy man, having heard that he had already received the last sacraments, hastened back to the college to procure something which might relieve his sufferings; but he did not return in time to find him alive. He had departed, repeating the words, "Gloria in excelsis Deo." Here we see in what a low and obscure condition of life nobleness and purity of sentiment may be found; for there is no height and delicacy of honour, no refinement of sentiment, in fact no

perfection of chivalry, which does not of necessity accompany such piety as this.

Under the influence of the Catholic religion, the peasant youth was devout and self-devoted, humble and courteous, amiable, affectionate, upright, and brave; and what more was requisite to constitute the knightly soul? As for birth, it is true we must say of such a person, "non patre præclaro, sed vita et pectore puro;" but in the ages of which we speak, Charlemagne and the poorest groom in all his courts had both heard "that the emperor and the beggar, the master and the servant, are brethren, having all the same Father."[1] From youth men were taught that "one nobility belongs to all the faithful, one dignity, one splendour of race, since all are born of the same Spirit and of the same sacrament of faith, and are sons of God and coheirs of the same inheritance; that the rich and powerful have no other Christ besides him who is followed by the poor; that they are initiated in no other sacraments, and have no higher expectation of a celestial kingdom; but that all are brethren and members of the body of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones."[2] But while all men might aspire to the praise of noble chivalry, its distinctions, which were nothing but those of nature, were esteemed of such surpassing dignity, that even kings considered themselves as deriving their chief glory from having possessed them. Witness the reply which Charles VI made to his father, when he offered him the choice of a crown of gold or of a helmet, as the emblem of that chivalry which he professed to admire: "Monseigneur," exclaimed the young prince, with energy, "donnez-moi le casque, et gardez votre couronne."

[1] S. Augustin, Hom. IV, inter 50.
[2] Catechism. Concil. Trident. pars IV, 31.

XIX. If nobility be understood as the honour consequent upon the circumstance of birth from virtuous parents, it is of an antiquity which is lost in the night of time. "If, indeed, you be his son," says Nestor to Telemachus, *σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντα.*[1] Menelaus, delighted with the wise answers of Telemachus, exclaims that he must have been born of good blood;[2] and Alcinous, desiring Ulysses to declare his name and parentage, adds an opinion which shews how great were the moral effects attributed to birth.[3] It is the pride of Penelope that her son is come of a good race. Diomedes begins his speech in council by boasting of the virtue of his father and grandfather, of whom he says, *ἀρετῇ δ' ἦν ἔξοχος αὐτῶν,*[4] and upon this ground he bespeaks the attention of the assembly. No one can ridicule the heroes of the Iliad for having this sentiment in such respect, when he hears the immortal words with which the son of Hippolochus defies his enemy:

> *Ἱππόλοχος δέ μ' ἔτικτε, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ φημὶ γενέσθαι·*
> *πέμπε δέ μ' ἐς Τροίην, καί μοι μάλα πόλλ' ἐπέτελλεν,*
> *αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν, καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων·*
> *μηδὲ γένος πατέρων αἰσχυνέμεν· οἵ μέγ' ἄριστοι*
> *ἔν τ' Ἐφύρῃ ἐγένοντο καὶ ἐν Λυκίῃ εὐρείῃ.*
> *ταύτης τοι γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὔχομαι εἶναι.*[5]

Virgil, in a lower strain, ascribes this sentiment to the Rutuli, in accounting for their affection for Turnus:

> Hunc decus egregium formæ movet atque juventæ,
> Hunc atavi reges, hunc claris dextera factis.[6]

But the genuine foundation appears again in his description of the assembly to witness the game of Troy before Æneas, when the spectators applauded the contending youths:

[1] Odyss. III, 123. [2] Ib. IV, 611. [3] Ib. VIII, 552.
[4] Il. XIV, 118. [5] Il. VI, 206. [6] Lib. VII, 473.

——— veterumque agnoscunt ora parentum.[1]

The importance attached to birth appears strikingly in Sophocles.[2] Honour, not expediency, is the motive which he knows will operate upon the noble-born youth.[3] The climax of horrors with Œdipus consists in his remembering that he was born of the noble race of Laius.[4] The lines of Euripides are celebrated—

δεινὸς χαρακτὴρ, κἀπίσημος ἐν βροτοῖς,
ἐσθλῶν γενέσθαι.[5]

Plutarch, in his life of Phocion, proceeds to an immoderate length in speaking of the importance of birth; but it is impossible not to admire Isocrates, when he describes the force of virtuous ancestors.[6] Polybius assigns the abolition of this principle as one of the chief causes of the ruin of Carthage. Plato, in many places, assumes it as the basis of his instruction. Aristotle admits the principle in its fullest extent.[7] The most eminent of Roman patriots, not excepting even Cato, acknowledged their belief in the influence of generous birth, in elevating the soul, and in filling it with a desire of virtuous deeds. Upon the whole, therefore, nothing can be more certain, than that the merit of despising an illustrious descent was unknown to the wisest and most virtuous men of antiquity; nay, at Rome, when the people became eligible to the offices of military tribune and quæstor, they invariably returned men of patrician family to the ninth election, and this notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the tribunes and the leaders of the popular party. In A.U.C. 333, Antistius and Pompilius, both of them tribunes, demanded the

[1] Lib. V, 575.
[2] Ajax, 1270.
[3] Philoctetes, 473.
[4] Œd. Tyran. 1370.
[5] Hecuba, 379.
[6] Evagoras.
[7] Polit. III, 13.

office of quæstor; the first for his son, the second for his brother; and yet, strange to relate, they were both disappointed, and patricians were elected by the people. That the same sentiments prevailed among the old Persians appears from the expressions of Otanes, when he sent that celebrated message to his daughter, which is related by Herodotus;[1] as also from the words of Otanès to Darius: and it is singular to observe, in the same historian, an instance of the very prejudice which sometimes belonged to the knights of the middle ages—"that it was beneath men of rank to contend with an adversary of inferior degree."[2]

If duration and general consent be an evidence to establish the justice of an opinion, such proof will not be wanting to confirm men in a reasonable respect for noble birth. Who more free from the vanity and ordinary prejudices of mankind than Montaigne? and yet, was he careless of his origin? Far from it. "Je suis nay," he says, "d'une famille qui a coulé sans esclat et sans tumulte et de longue memoire, particulierement ambitieuse de preud-hommie."

Sir Henry Sidney says in a letter to his son Philip, "Remember, my sonne, the noble blood you are descended of by your mother's side, and thinke that only by virtuous lyf and good action you may be an ornament to that illustre famylie; and otherwise, through vice and slouthe, you shal be counted *labes generis*, one of the greatest curses that can happen to man." Sir Philip Sidney thus speaks of his own descent: "I am a Dudley in blood, the duke's daughter's son; and I do acknowledge, though in all truth I may justly affirm that I am by my father's side of ancient and always well-esteemed and well-matched gentry,

[1] Lib. III, 67. [2] Lib. V, 112.

I do acknowledge, I say, that my chiefest honour is to be a Dudley, and truly I am glad to have cause to set forth the nobility of that blood whereof I am descended." "Our calmer judgment," says the historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, "will rather tend to moderate than to suppress the pride of an ancient and worthy race. The satirist may laugh, the philosopher may preach; but reason herself will respect the prejudices and habits which have been consecrated by the experience of mankind. The institution of hereditary rank has been maintained," he proceeds to state, "for the wisest and most beneficial purposes, in almost every climate of the globe, and in almost every modification of political society; wherever the distinction of birth is allowed to form a superior order in the state, education and example should always, and will often, produce among them great dignity of sentiment. If we read of some illustrious line, so ancient that it has no beginning, so worthy that it ought to have no end, we sympathise in its various fortunes; nor can we blame the generous enthusiasm, or even the harmless vanity, of those who are allied to the honours of its name."[1]

It seems, indeed, as if men of thoughtful minds, in proportion as they were removed from the great resources which the Catholic Church afforded to all ranks of society, were desirous of clinging, with so much the greater resolution, to all the minor safeguards of generosity and honour. It could only be one who had lost sight of the standard of Christian chivalry, who could suffer such a word to overflow the enclosure of his teeth, as that uttered by Sir Philip Sidney, that his "chiefest honour was to be a Dudley."

Nobility, however, must not be reduced to a mere

[1] Memoirs of the Life, &c.

spirit and claim to consideration on account of birth. Aristotle defines it to be ancient or ancestral wealth and virtue.[1] The law of primogeniture, as affecting the succession of property and privileges, seems to have passed from Egypt and Greece to Rome. According to Homer, it was this which gave Jupiter himself the pre-eminence over Neptune and Pluto, and the poet represents the Fates and Furies as vindicators of this right.[2] Plato ascribes to the elder-born of a family the right to command the younger.[3] We know that under the law of nature, before the written law, "the first-born were priests, to officiate for the rest in all things that appertain to God."[4] Marchangy has treated this subject, in its connexion with the institutions of the middle ages, with considerable learning and ability.[5] Peerage, in the ordinary sense of the term, commenced in the twelfth century;[6] although the hereditary descent of land was an institution of the earliest times; for all ancient legislators, as Niebuhr observes, rested the result of their material ordinances, for virtue, civil order, and good manners, on landed property, or at least on the secured hereditary possession of land for the greatest possible number of the citizens.[7] In the middle ages, the feudal nobility lived in castles, which, as may be inferred from the names of many, like Rochefort, Rochetaillée, Montfort, and others, were generally placed upon high rocks; from which circumstance, Vico, in his *Scienza Nuova*, supposes the Latin terms for noblemen, summo loco, illustri loco nati, to have been derived. The Spaniard's reverence for the

[1] Polit. lib. IV, c. 7.
[2] Il. XV, 204. Vide Shuckford, book VI.
[3] De Legibus, IV. [4] Epist. ad Heb. V, 1.
[5] Tristan, tom. V, 419.
[6] Boulainvilliers, Hist. de la Pairie de France.
[7] Hist. of Rome, I, 201.

seat of his ancestors, with whom "hidalgo de solar conocido" is the expression for a man of old family (so that the court of the kings of Spain is generally almost deserted, and even it is difficult to find nobles who will accept of public office), may be traced back to great antiquity; for the same sentiment occurs in Menander—

οἴκοι μένειν χρὴ, καὶ μένειν ἐλεύθερον.[1]

Such was the integrity and independence ascribed to simple gentlemen, that kings were warned not to disregard their judgment:

Qui que preudomme ait conseiller,
Soit rois ou quens, je le conseille
Pour s'onnour, croire son conseil.

Their dignity was esteemed equal to that of kings, upon the principle urged by Plato, where he discourses upon the royal discipline, and says, "Whoever shall possess this virtue, whether he hold a public office or be but a private man, is justly styled royal, according to this discipline."[2] A remarkable example was that of the noble and brave Enguerrand de Coucy, the last of his illustrious race, who perished so miserably, in 1397, far from his country, at Broussa, among the infidels. From being a simple baron, he had become, by his personal merit, so mighty a gentleman, that there went a common saying in France,

Je ne suis roi, ni prince aussi;
Je suis le sire de Coucy.

The reply of Grimoald, duke of Beneventum, to King Pipin, might have been the motto of all such men—

[1] Stobæi Florileg. II, 70. [2] Politicus.

Liber et ingenuus sum natus utroque parente;
Semper ero liber credo, tuente Deo.

The king was not the sole fountain of honour, for every simple knight could confer knighthood. Thus the chronicle of St. Denis relates, that when Philippe, son of Philippe le Bel, at the feast of Pentecost, knighted his three sons, Louis, Philippe, and Charles, these princes immediately conferred knighthood upon four hundred other youths. The dignity of a knight-banneret was hereditary.[1] The degrees of nobility were not to interfere with its fundamental principle, that one gentleman cannot be more gentle than another.[2] Baldus says, that an emperor or king is not more noble than a simple gentleman.[3] Thus Francis I writing to the emperor Charles V, signed himself first gentleman of France; and Henry IV used to say, that his quality as a gentleman was the noblest title that he possessed. As an old writer says, "this was the general title throughout the world; so that nothing more idle can be thought on, than for a particular prince to erect a new degree of blood above this title, which is universal in all nations."[4]

"The two titles of nobility and gentry," says Gwillim, "are of equal esteem in the use of heraldry, though custom hath equally divided them, and applied the first to gentry of the highest degree, and the latter to nobles of the lowest rank."

Among the Anglo-Saxons, with whom there was as much inequality of rank as with ourselves, the nobly born were not distinguished by any peculiar title; they were rather marked out by the name of

[1] Hist. de la Chevalerie Francaise par Gassier, 89.
[2] Dissertation IX, sur l'Hist. de St. Louis.
[3] La Colombiere, Théatre d'Honneur et de Chevalerie, II, 154.
[4] A Vindication of the Degree of Gentry, in opposition to titular honour, and the humour of riches being the measure of honour, 1663.

the family which had become illustrious, as the Fabii and Cornelii of the Romans. In later times, the gentry of England were Knights Templars and Knights of Malta, being considered noble. Brother Humbert was offended when he heard the knights templars styled lords instead of brethren of the Temple. "Quid prodest vincere Saracenos," he observed, "et vinci a vitiis"?[1] for the vanity of titles seemed worthy of being ranked among vices: titles did not add to nobility.

In the letters of Richmond, Clarenceux King of Arms in the reign of Henry VII, quoted by Sir James Laurence from the Harleian manuscripts, the gentlemen are named before noblemen. Sir Edward Coke counts all noble who have a right to bear arms; and Camden, Clarenceux King of Arms, speaks of gentlemen as the nobiles minores.

Matthew Carter, in his *Honor Redivivus;* Sir John Ferne, in his Blazonry of Gentry and Nobility; Sir Thomas Smith, in his Commonwealth of England; Gwillim, Edmondson, Peacham, in his Complete Gentleman, &c., are all express as to the nobility of the British gentry, who were considered of equal rank with the nobility of France, at the court of Bordeaux and Poitiers, in the days of our Angevin sovereigns. Their nobility is also proved by Sir James Laurence, from proclamations, state papers, and monumental inscriptions, in which the gentry are styled noble. Thus, in Doncaster church, "Here lyeth, of noble extraction, John Harrington, a famous squire, and noble Isabel, his wife"; and at Romaldkirk, in Richmondshire, so late as 1664, a simple knight is inscribed, "Nobilissimus Dominus Apelby de Lartington." Sir James Laurence justly censures Dr. Johnson for saying, in his dictionary, a gentleman is "one of good extrac-

[1] Gurtler, 116.

tion, but not noble"; an instance of the modern blunder of confounding nobility with peerage.

"The knights and squires of England," continues Sir James Laurence, "preferred being styled the gentry to being styled the nobility; they were logicians enough to know the axiom, 'omne majus continet minus,' and they, being allowedly gentlemen, could never dream that their nobility could be contested; and the peers were styled the nobility, not because they were the only nobles, but because, as there were many peers who were not gentlemen, they could not collectively be styled the gentry of the upper house. The peer, therefore, is not always at the head: he may be at the tail of his family."

In the White King it is said, that young Maximilian had a great inclination to examine into the origin and antiquity of noble families, and for this purpose learned men were appointed, who should do nothing else but search through convents and libraries, in order to discover facts relating to heroic houses. The family of Dahlberg, of Worms, is held to be the oldest of the whole German chivalry; so that, when a new emperor was crowned, it was usual for a herald to demand whether there were a Dahlberg present, that he might approach to receive the order of knighthood. The first class of the nobility of Venice is of the electoral families, descended from the twelve tribunes, who elected the doge in the year 709, which all subsist to this day. These are, the Contarini, Morosini, Gradenighi, Baduari, Tiepoli, Micheli, Sanudi, Memmi, Falieri, Dandoli, Polani, and Barozzi. There are four other families nearly as ancient—the Justiniani, Cornari, Bragadini, and Bembi. The French house of Montmorenci is traced to about the year 950.[1] The illustrious family of De Pins is derived from the princely house of Thann-

[1] Duchesne, l'Hist. de la Maison de Montmorenci.

Waldburg, from which was descended Gausserand I, one of the nine barons of Catalonia who were of German origin, having been the first to fight against the Moors in Spain, under Pipin, king of France. This Gausserand had received the barony De Pinos, at the foot of the Pyrenees. After the memorable victory of Urgel, in 768, Charlemagne obtained from the pope an order that the province of Tarragona should have nine cathedral churches, to perpetuate the renown of these nine barons. It must be confessed, that such nobility might reasonably inspire a great interest. In England the most ancient and noble blood is oftener found in families which have no titles of peerage than in those which have obtained them. In the earlier ages of Christianity, we find the same degree of interest attached to the antiquity of houses. The philosophic disciples of Boethius remembered with pride that he was descended from the Roman Manlii; and even St. Jerome, in the epitaph of St. Paula, has not omitted that she was descended from Agamemnon. It was natural, however, that this sentiment should sometimes give rise to pretensions which were not a little ridiculous. The strange knight, in the Morte d'Arthur, replies to Sir Gawayn, who had asked him of his lineage, "My fader is lyneally descended of Alysaunder and of Hector by ryght lygne, and Duke Josue and Machabeus were of our lyneage."[1]

The ancients, besides this domestic vanity, had a pride in their national origin, which was still more extravagant, as may be witnessed in the anxiety of the Athenians to wear their golden grasshopper, and of the Arcadians to prove that they were προσέληνοι, or before the moon. Cicero complains of the falsehood to which the vanity of new-made nobles had

[1] I, 149.

recourse in tracing their descent; and says, that it would be the same thing if he were to affirm that he was descended from M. Tullius, who was a patrician, consul with Servius Sulpicius in the tenth year after the expulsion of the kings.[1]

The heroic origin of many of the great families had a charm to which he was not insensible. The Junian family might have the images of twenty of the noblest houses allied to them carried with their dead in procession.[2] The Julian family, at the funeral of Drusus, displayed, in long order, those of Æneas and all the Alban kings, Romulus and the Sabine nobles, Attus Clausus and his successors of the Claudian house.[3] The Æmilian family traced their descent from Numa, or, indeed, from Mamercus, son of Pythagoras; the Marcii traced their descent from Ancus Martius, the grandson of Numa. Plutarch says, that the houses of the Publicolæ, the Messalæ, and Valerii, illustrious for the space of six hundred years, still acknowledged Publicola as the fountain of their honour. The descendants of Pinarius, who gave hospitality to Hercules when he came to the spot which is now Rome, were at Rome in the time of Diodorus, and regarded as the most ancient of the noble houses.[4]

In separating the spirit of chivalry from nobility, it may appear as if there were left nothing to produce in favour of its origin; however, in opposition to the sentence of Cornelius Agrippa, who undertakes to shew, that from the commencement of the world there never was a nobility which had not a wicked beginning,[5]—an opinion which a French writer has repeated in our time, dividing all men into the two classes of the conquerors and the conquered,—it may be stated with perfect truth,

[1] Brutus. [2] Tacitus, An. III, 76. [3] Id. IV, 9.
[4] Diodorus, lib. IV, 21. [5] De Vanitate Scientiarum, 114.

that such an institution is founded in nature and in the principles of human society. The French, after all their efforts to gain equality, succeeded only in making families of the most ancient and noble blood surrender their lands to those of the most base origin; to men of minds mechanical, whose manners gave witness to the intentions of nature respecting them. Nobility does not exclusively belong to any form of government. No people ever shewed more enthusiasm for noble families than the Genoese republicans. Every heir of the names of Doria, Spinola, Fieschi, or Grimaldi, disposed of a force of opinion greater than was ever exercised by nobility in any monarchy. Petrarch, who was so ardent in his love of republics, is repeatedly urging the motive of nobility, and reminding those who do not belong to it that there are other duties required by their state. When Justinian gave Rome the simple form of an absolute monarchy, he abolished these distinctions, and made all the people equally citizens of the empire; "yet," says Gibbon, "he could not eradicate the popular reverence which always waits on the possession of hereditary wealth, or the memory of famous ancestors." Xenophon relates, that when Orontas was led through the ranks to execution, the soldiers paid him the usual reverence, although they knew that he was going to be put to death.[1] Nature has taken more care that conservative sentiments and principles should exist than that men should be always able to discourse on their utility. Without doubt it is for the general interest that social superfluities are employed in the institutions of aristocracy;[2] like knighthood, the power of nobility was to be the protection of the weak, as might be inferred from the affection which is sym-

[1] Anab. I, 6. [2] Barante, des Communes et de l'Aristocratie.

bolically shewn to have been due to it in that beautiful passage of romance where the knights of King Arthur, being about to depart, come out of the minster to mount their horses, and "ther was wepynge of the riche and poore; and the kyng torned aweye, and myght not speke for wepyng."[1] Personal qualities may have sometimes dictated the direction which was given to the general principle, as when in the year 804 the Poles elected Lasko II for their king, on account of his having won a foot-race, on the principle of the Æthiopians, who used to choose the tallest and strongest man to be king;[2] but generally, if personal merit were to yield a claim to such dignity, there would be a wide field open for the syllogism of self-love; and, as M. de Bonald says, "when the major of an argument is an error (such as supposing that the greatest virtue and talents should govern), and the minor a passion, it is to be feared that the conclusion will be a crime." In heroic ages it was certainly believed that virtue was the source of nobility, and that there is nothing real in nobility but what is independent of a monarch's will. "If the offspring of great men," says the herald, "vaunt of their lineage or titular dignity, and want their virtues, they are but like base serving-men, who carry on their sleeves the badge of some noble family, yet are themselves only ignoble persons." "Things are only preserved by means of those which produced them. Virtue produced nobility, therefore it can only be preserved by virtue."[3] Such is the language of all heraldic writers of eminence. If that birth which no king could impart was regarded as the highest proof of nobility, it was from the opinion, that the semblance of great souls and the character of heroic men might

[1] Morte d'Arthur, II, 212. [2] Herod. III, 20.
[3] La Colombiere, Théâtre d'Honneur et de Chevalerie, Traité de la Noblesse par La Roque, &c.

sometimes be conveyed by secret and undiscernible conveyances, in consequence of that divine favour which would be extended to generations descended from a man who was faithful to Heaven; or from a belief in the action of a more general principle, such as is implied in the lines of Shakspeare—

> O worthiness of nature! breed of greatness!
> Cowards father cowards, and base things sire base.

For that sometimes parents did seem to revive in their offspring, not only in countenance and form of limb, but even in disposition of mind, was an opinion too firmly established by history and experience to be shaken by any argument from reason. The Claudian family flourished at Rome during so long a period with the same characteristic features of pride and ferocity; it produced the sad Tiberius, then the monstrous Caligula, and at length, after six hundred years, it became extinct on the death of Nero.[1] Æschylus bursts out in a sublime and somewhat prophetic strain: "How the destiny of families directing their ways according to justice always produces good children. But ancient insolence is wont to generate indeed new insolence, to the mischief of mortals some time or other, whenever the appointed time comes."

> οἴκων γὰρ εὐθυδίκων
> καλλίπαις πότμος ἀεί.
> φιλεῖ δὲ τίκτειν ὕβρις
> μὲν παλαιὰ νεά-
> ζουσαν ἐν κακοῖς βροτῶν ὕβριν,
> τόν' ἢ τόθ', ὅταν τὸ κύριον μόλῃ.[2]

As with the ancients, the world has remarked that in all ages there have been families characterized by certain noble dispositions: one race will be remarkable for valour in arms, like the Orsini;

[1] Conspect. Med. Theor. Gregor.

[2] Agam. 739.

another for excellent and generous men, like the Colonna; another for men of political wisdom, like the Soranzi and the Venieri. The practice of degradation in the middle ages bears testimony to the high opinion which was then entertained of the character of all nobility. To break faith, to neglect one's post, to be guilty of adultery, or drunkenness, or of insolent boasting, or of injustice and cruelty to any poor helpless person, (for these crimes are distinctly specified by the ancient statutes,) was to subject one's self to this punishment, which was equivalent to civil death.[1] Ste. Palaye gives in detail the whole ceremony of degradation, which was well calculated to impress all beholders with this idea. The same description occurs in Tirante the White, where degradation is inflicted upon the recreant knight who had renounced Christianity. When Charles the Bold held his toyson at Bruges, in the Church of our Lady, the Count of Nevers being accused, and declining to answer in his defence, his crime being fully proved, at the moment when the King of Arms ought to have called him to the offering, his picture was taken down from its place and trampled upon, and a black slab, with an inscription stating his crime, was hung up in its stead.[2] Alain Chartier relates that the Constable Duguesclin resolved to enforce the ancient discipline of chivalry whenever any nobleman should perform any act of flagrant dishonour.

XX. The passages produced to shew the importance which was ascribed to noble birth will have already led us to understand the advantage which was thought to arise from nobility. "If there be any good in nobility," says Boethius, "I think it is this alone, that a necessity seems to be

[1] La Colombiere, Théâtre d'Honneur et de Chevalerie, vol. II, 567. Favin, Théâtre d'Honneur, lib. X, p. 1830.

[2] Georges Chastellain, Chronique, ccxciv.

imposed on the noble, that they should not degenerate from the virtue of their ancestors."[1] Quinctilian says that "there is a twofold view of ancestry in the praise of a man; aut enim respondisse nobilitati pulchrum erit, aut humilius genus illustrasse factis."[2] "Prove yourself worthy of your parents," was a saying of Periander, one of the seven sages of Greece.[3]

The reputation of generous labours was as a statue of honour to the dead;[4] but with families as with men, it was perseverance which kept honour bright:

> ——— To have done, is to hang
> Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
> In monumental mockery.

Plato supplies a beautiful passage in which Socrates speaks of birth: when Critias assures the philosopher that the young man Charmides, his cousin, is as remarkable for temperance and all virtue as for beauty of person, Socrates replies, "Certes, it is but right, O Charmides, that in these things you should excel other men; for I do not think that any person could shew among all the Athenians two houses from the union of which it were probable that there would succeed a more noble and excellent offspring than those from which you are sprung: for your paternal house, that of Critias, is celebrated by Anacreon, and by Solon, and by many other poets, as having excelled in beauty and virtue and all happiness; and your maternal descent is equally illustrious, for than Pyrilampus, your uncle, no one on the whole continent is said to have had a more beautiful person and greater renown, and generally, this whole house is in no manner inferior to the other. So that being sprung from these, it is pro-

[1] Lib. III, 6. [2] Lib. III, 7.
[3] Stobæi Florileg. I, 119. [4] Euripid. Hercul. Furens, 355.

bable that you would be the first in all things. And now, as far as what pertains to the eyes to determine, O dear son of Glaucon, you appear to me to be no disgrace to your ancestors; but if in addition you possess temperance and all the other virtues which this man ascribes to you, dear Charmides, your mother bore you in a happy hour."

Plutarch, defending nobility, ranks the objections which are usually brought against it among the calumnies of the sophists. He refers to the importance ascribed to birth by Homer, who names almost all his heroes as being the sons of great men. "How often," continues Plutarch, "is nobility of birth extolled by Simonides, Pindar, Alcæus, and Stesichorus!" Plato says that the nobility of parents is a great treasure; Philemon says that it is the characteristic of such men to offer themselves as victims, which will account for the sentence, "Rara est in nobilitate senectus." Plutarch adds, "Think not that I would compare virtue with bare nobility; this would be the folly of Glaucus, and to exchange golden for brass armour: I only affirm, that virtue with noble birth is a combination of excellence." Aristotle shews that there are slaves by nature and nobles by nature, men who would be slaves though never so exalted, and noble though reduced by fortune to slavery. And if nobility is thus esteemed by consent of the human race, why should we despise it? And do not trifle like a sophist, saying that nobility is not our own, nor in our power; that the poverty of Aristides was more noble than the wealth of Midas; that Socrates, son of a statuary, was more noble than Sardanapalus. This is all very fine declamation; but after all I will not consent to you that nobility is but a vain name. The trophies of ancestors may not be at our command, any more than the riches of an ancient race; but nevertheless, the remembrance and enjoyment

of them may be instruments of wisdom and ornaments to virtue. What shall I say to the family of the Stoics? No wonder if that stoic, Lapithas, framed of adamant, did not recognize nobility, who, when his breast was transfixed by a spear, declared that he hardly felt it. No wonder if the frequenters of that porch take away nobility from men, who take away also love, pity, mercy, and the other affections given by nature; who deny that they burn in the midst of flames, or that they are swallowed up in the water when in the midst of the sea. They recount the vices of heroes. But why dwell only on the wrath of Achilles? was it worse than that of Phalaris, or Agathocles, or Dionysius, who were ignoble? Chrysippus reviles nobility. Oh, that an Ulysses would rise up to silence the insolence of this coarse Thersites! These crimes are not peculiar to nobility. Has that porch of yours never beheld adulterers? Quote not Euripides on your side, whose maxim was, that the middle rank saved a state;[1] he is also on ours:

εἰ τοῖς ἐν οἴκῳ χρήμασιν λελείμμεθα,
ἡ δ' εὐγένεια καὶ τὸ γενναῖον μένει.

Philo, an ignoble sophist, says, that it is a difficult and vague subject to determine who are noble; but I oppose to him Posidonius, an admirable philosopher, who refutes Tubero. Nobility is not in the wealth of ancestors. Where then? The particle εὐ, which is at the beginning of the word εὐγένεια, denotes something laudable and excellent; as in the word εὐπρόσωπον, a handsome face, for beauty is the perfection of the face; and so it is prefixed to eyes, in order to express clear sight. What, then, is the perfection of a family? Virtue. Nobility, therefore, consists in the virtue of a race. But while I

[1] Stobæi Florileg. II.

wish nobility to retain its rights, I would not have it imagine that it had a right to trample upon inferior orders. Aristobulus relates that certain Indian dogs were given to Alexander, which could not be roused to attack wild bulls, but when a lion was produced, they rushed upon him to battle; in like manner, if plebeians calumniate nobility, if sophists bark at it, let them calumniate, let them bark, it is well to keep silence, and imitate Cæsar, who, when it was told him that some persons reviled him, replied, "It is enough for me that they cannot injure me by their deeds."[1]

"Omnes boni semper nobilitati favemus," says Cicero.[2] In another place he speaks as follows: "I am of opinion, that when the lives and manners of the nobility change, the manners of the state change also: vicious nobles do not merely conceive vices, but they pour them into the state; they are not only themselves corrupted, but they corrupt and they injure more by example than by crime."[3] Upon this principle Agesilaus punished great men for the same faults which he overlooked in their inferiors.[4] "Splendor vester facit," says Cicero, "ut peccare sine summo reipublicæ detrimento non possitis." So that the institution of nobility was made to supply the double motive of shame and praise, to excite men to virtue. These sentiments were not confined to the philosophers and moralists of antiquity: they were continually appealed to in all the ordinary affairs of life. Witness the advantage which Cicero draws from dwelling upon the family of his client, L. Flaccus, and upon the fact of his not having degenerated from the glory and virtue of his ancestors. Lentulus, the conspirator, sealed the treacherous letter which he sent

[1] Plutarch de Nobilitate.
[2] Pro Sextio.
[3] De Legibus, III, 14.
[4] Xenophon, Agesilaus, XI, 6.

to the Allobroges with a seal on which was engraved the head of his grandfather, a hero remarkable for a singular love of his country; and Catiline sent to Manlius's camp, before he left Rome, that silver eagle which he used to keep with reverence to his house, on account of its having belonged to C. Marius during his expedition against the Cimbri. "How was it possible," cried Cicero, in alluding to the former, "that the sight of this venerable image did not prevent you at the moment when you were about to make it the instrument of crime?" In his oration for C. Rabirius Postumus, he declares it to be a law of nature, "quæ in familia aliqua laus forte floruerit, hanc fere, qui sunt ejusdem stirpis, cupidissime persequantur"; which he illustrates by the example of his client, who "quamvis patrem suum nunquam viderat, tamen et natura ipsa duce, quæ plurimum valet, et assiduis domesticorum sermonibus, in paternæ vitæ similitudinem deductus est." Of the glory consequent upon his own triumph over the enemies of his country, he declares that he will leave, as an ample patrimony, the inheritance to his son.[1] The words of Scipio to his army, "Vos modo, milites, favete nomini Scipionum,"[2] breathe the same spirit. Livy attributes to it the heroic death of Hasdrubal;[3] and it was to its influence that many other celebrated exploits of the ancient heroes were commonly ascribed. Demosthenes, in his speech against Midias, remarks, that, according to the practice of their ancestors, not even nobility of blood was admitted as an excuse for insolence, speaking of it as if it would have outweighed previous personal merit. The same sentiment dictates the exclamation in Terence,

[1] Epist. CCCLXXII. [2] Livy, lib. X, 29.
[3] Lib. XXVII, 49.

——— ex illan' familia
Tam illiberale facinus esse ortum ? [1]

Not even Horace can escape its influence:

Dos est magna parentium
Virtus, et metuens alterius viri
Certo fœdere castitas,
Et peccare nefas, aut pretium emori.

In that most critical moment when the Athenians at Syracuse were about to venture their last hopes upon a naval engagement, Nicias, having concluded his affecting speech, went through the host, and called upon each of the trierarchs, as Thucydides adds, πατρόθεν τε ἐπονομάζων.[2] When Metellus was known to be the encourager and patron of the infamous Clodius, Servilius rose up in the senate and addressed himself to his kinsman Metellus, and, calling up from the dead all the family of the Metelli, laid before him the glorious acts of his ancestors, Metellus could hold out no longer, but with tears in his eyes gave himself up to Servilius, and professed all future services to Cicero. The eloquence of Demosthenes never rose to a higher strain than when he asserted the efficacy of this principle, and traced its operation through the deeds of heroes. "What inspired the Erechthidæ with the resolution to die for their country, but the remembrance of that divine founder, Erechtheus, whose name distinguished them, and whose virtue was their inheritance? What determined the Ægidæ to defend their freedom, but the example of the great Theseus? What excited the Pandionidæ to noble vengeance, but the remembrance of Procne and Philomela, the daughters of Pandion? What filled the Leontidæ with resolution to win glory, but the fame of the daughters of Leos, who devoted themselves to death

[1] Adelph. [2] Lib. VII, 69.

for their country? What made the Acamantidæ dare all hazards in defence of their wives and parents, but the strains of Homer, which commemorate the embassy of Acamas to Troy for the deliverance of a woman? What moved the Œnidæ to labour for the preservation of Greece, but the remembrance of that common blood which they derived from Œneus? What imparted to the Cecropidæ wisdom and power, but the example of that founder who united the understanding of a man with the strength of a dragon? What obliged the Hippothoontæ to win worship, but the glory of their descent from Hippothoon, the son of Neptune? What determined the Aiantidæ to prefer death to infamy, but the example of Ajax, that glorious ancestor, who refused life when deprived of honour? What influenced the Antiochidæ, but the memory of Antiochus, and his descent from Hercules? *δεῖν οὖν ἡγήσαντο ἢ ζῆν ἀξίως τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ἢ τεθνάναι καλῶς.*"[1]

It would be injustice to deny that the spirit of later chivalry was indebted to the influence of this heroic principle. For one gentleman to say to another that he was of more noble or more ancient blood than his, would indeed have been contrary to the spirit of this chivalry;[2] but Castiglione proves the fact in favour of illustrious birth, and appeals to the experience of all nations.[3] The opinion of Agamemnon, that his noble dignity imposed upon him the duty of being the first to endure labours,[4] is the general doctrine of the chivalrous romances. "Sythe that ye be come of kynges and quenes," says Sir Galahad to Melyas de Lyle, "now loketh that knyghthood be wel sette in you, for ye oughte

[1] Or. LX Epitaph.
[2] Marc de la Beraudiere, le Combat de seul a seul: Paris, 1608.
[3] The Courtier, book I. [4] Il. X, 88.

to be a myrrour unto all chyvalry."[1] The cry of the heralds was always, "Souviens toi de qui tu es fils, et ne forligne pas." St. Augustin speaks of preserving the paternal ring, as an evidence of the affectionate reverence with which men should regard the memory of their fathers.[2] "The last thing, my child," said Otho to his nephew, "that I have to recommend to you, is, neither entirely to forget, nor yet to remember too well, that you had an emperor for your uncle." Again, in our heroic bard,

> Is my name Talbot? and am I your son?
> And shall I fly?
> The world will say, He is not Talbot's blood
> That basely fled when noble Talbot stood.

Cosmo de Medici, conversing with Santi, who was the reputed son of Bentivoglio, and who was urged to hasten to Bologna upon the death of that nobleman, in order to avail himself of his name, adopted this principle as the ground of his whole argument. "No one here," he said, "can give you counsel but yourself. You must act as your own heart directs. If you are the son of Hercules Bentivoglio, you will feel yourself drawn on towards enterprises worthy of your father and of your house; if you are the son of Angelo Cascese, you will remain at Florence, devoting your life to your manufactures."

It was this fear of being an injury to the honour of his house, which oppressed the soul of the noble Hamlet in his last moments:

> O God!—Horatio, what a wounded name,
> Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
> If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
> Absent thee from felicity awhile,
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
> To tell my story.

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[1] Morte d'Arthur, II, 218.

[2] De Civitate Dei, I, 13.

It must always be admitted, to the honour of nobility, that, excepting in rare instances, it has proved an obstacle in the way of establishing any odious system of despotism or anarchy. Without doubt this praise is rather to be referred to that spirit of chivalry which its admirers ascribe to it; for it proceeds on the supposition stated by Montesquieu, that honour, which is a moving principle of monarchy, can never be that of despotism. Socrates observed, that tyrants do not desire that love and friendship and magnanimity should be multiplied. It is not for their interest that there should be great souls and firm bonds of friendship.[1] Wicked and degenerate rulers endeavour to free themselves from the presence of the old nobility. "Thus Dionysius used to live in the company of fugitive criminals and barbarians, and would never regard as his friend any one who was either worthy of freedom or who wished to be free."[2] Caligula even deprived the old families of their hereditary emblems. He took the ring from Torquatus, the tuft of hair from Cincinnatus, and the surname of Great from the descendants of Pompey.[3]

On the accession of Louis XI. all the chivalry of the court of Charles VII. disappeared. In the former reign, the ancient nobles and men of merit and honour surrounded the throne, but they gave way now to the basest minions. The venerable Guillaume des Ursins lost the place of Chancellor Brézé and Dampmartin were disgraced; and instead of seeing the galleries of Plessis les Tours filled with princes of the blood, warriors such as Dunois, Saintrailles, and so many other heroes who still lived, there were only to be seen a vile barber, Olivier le Diable, whose insolence equalled his credit; and

[1] Plato, Conviv. [2] Cicero, Tuscul. V.
[3] Suetonius in Vit. Calig.

La Balue, son of a tailor, formerly servant to the bishop of Angers, whose kindness he had repaid with the basest ingratitude. These were the men who disposed of all places, engaged their master to levy an additional tax of three millions, to put himself as it was termed "hors de page."

Perhaps a strong argument in favour of nobility may be the result of tracing the leading principles which generally are employed in raising objections against it. Bossuet remarked the pleasure which some men derived from comparing themselves to brute animals, and said, that when they thus pleaded against their own nature in behalf of the brutes, they resembled a man of illustrious birth, who, from the influence of vile and ignoble habits, desired to lose the memory of his dignity, lest he should be obliged to live in the exercise of the duties which it imposed;[1] and it is certain that it is such men, not others of a lower origin, who are the natural and proper adversaries of nobility. While it is true what St. Francis of Sales used to say, that "noble minds are never amused with these trifles of rank, and honour, and respect, since they have much better things to do; and that it is the characteristic of base and indolent spirits to be arrested by them," it is no less certain that the poor and the chivalry of nature always are inclined to respect nobility in others; at least, they are the last to declaim against it, because they know that it is not worth even a thought when divested of the spirit of chivalry; and that where that chivalry exists, its presence cannot interfere with the attainment of any object which can be dear to a noble heart. On the other hand, demagogue nobles are the most decided enemies of chivalry, and the most dangerous enemies of freedom. In free states it is

[1] De la Connoissance de Dieu.

almost always such men that establish a tyranny. Men like Clodius, who endeavour to change their patrician for the plebeian rank, will always have some base object to accomplish—either the gratification of ignoble propensities, or the friendship of profligate men, or the pursuit of revenge and envy against persons whom they could not otherwise injure. Thus Caius Marius used to boast that he could shew no images of others, or monuments of the dead: "these things he said," observes Plutarch, "not out of mere vanity, or needlessly to embroil himself with the nobility; but he saw the people took pleasure in seeing the Senate insulted, and that they measured the greatness of a man's mind by the insolence of his language; and therefore, to gratify them, he spared not the greatest men in the state."

Upon the whole, and to conclude a subject which certainly in these ages of the world should command but little interest,—for chivalry has other duties besides contending for titles of nobility, and what is essential in the institution of nobility will stand, in spite of all that the masters of this new science of perfectibility can do to overthrow it,—there is no doctrine of political science more certain than that, under all circumstances of government, the harmony of social life, the cultivation of the arts, the interests of literature, the happiness of the people themselves, no doubt the secret end of all institutions coeval with society, require the preservation of degree. "Nothing," says Bacon, "doth derogate from the dignity of a state more than confusion of degree."

> Take but degree away, untune that string,
> And hark, what discord follows! each thing meets
> In mere oppugnancy: the bounded waters
> Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores,
> And make a sop of all this solid globe.

> Strength should be lord of imbecility,
> And the rude son should strike his father dead.
> Force should be right; or rather right and wrong,
> Between whose endless jar justice resides,
> Should lose their names, and so should justice too.
> Then everything includes itself in power,
> Power into will; will into appetite;
> And appetite, an universal wolf,
> So doubly seconded with will and power,
> Must make perforce an universal prey,
> And, last, eat up himself.[1]

In the middle ages nobility assumed an essentially religious and somewhat of a symbolic character, which invested it with an air of venerable majesty, of which we can now only form an idea from consulting those heroic and holy annals which exhibit the lives of saints. According to the harmonious and divine philosophy of the Catholic Church, every man had his post and his honourable employment. The pride of inferiors was calmed, and the world beheld the burden, as well as the ornaments, of greatness.

The advice which St. Bernard addressed to the inferior clergy dwelling in monastic retirement, was applicable also to the laity in regard to their superiors. "Brethren," said the saint, "let us reverence the bishops, but let us fear their labours; if we think upon their labours, we shall not be desirous of their honours, nor shall we be disposed to watch, but rather to honour them. It would be inhuman to censure the works of men, of whose burden you do not feel the weight. He who is occupied in public affairs may sometimes be discerned acting and speaking less circumspectly; but let no man who remains in security at home venture to condemn him." Moreover, while the spirit of the inferior classes of men was thus tempered, princes and nobles were taught to consider themselves as

[1] Troilus and Cressida, act I. sc III.

elevated for the purpose of ministering to the wants of their inferiors. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister"; and it was an affecting appeal of St. Chrysostom, which was never lost upon the great in Catholic times, when he said, "Would it not be shameful that, in a religion which induces us to recognize Jesus Christ for our master and our sovereign master, there should be any men who wish to possess a more absolute empire than he exercised?" The great, therefore, might be humble even as the lowest servant of their hall. For it was not pride to remain in the station to which men were born, and in which the providence of God had placed them, provided they made use of it in the manner for which God designed it. Noble rank was in that event perfectly compatible with preserving the sentiments of a humble heart, with the knowledge of one's faults and misery, and with the habitual conviction, that it was something foreign to men's selves with which the order of God had invested them.[1] In fact, the Church instructed all her children, that to be proud of birth, or rank, or fortune, was to be guilty of a mortal sin; and how far the spirit of nobility conformed to this principle, it shall be my endeavour to demonstrate, by facts of history, in the next book.

It is not a valid objection which some have advanced against nobility, considering it as involving men in the condition of those who seek the praise and honour of the world. "It is partly right," says St. Augustin, "that men should wish to be praised; since it is right that they should desire truth, which, although it may not be the object of praise, is yet alone worthy of praise. The good

[1] Bourdaloue, Serm. sur l'Ambition; and Nicole, Essais de Morale, vol. II.

Master hath taught us by his Apostle, not to act well in order that we may be praised by men, having their praise for our end; and yet, for the sake of other men, to seek their praise; for when good men are praised, it is not those who are praised, but it is those who praise that are benefited; for to the one it is sufficient that they are good; but they who ought to imitate the good are to be congratulated whenever good men are praised by them, since in this manner they prove that they are pleased with goodness: for thus said the Apostle, 'Placete omnibus per omnia, sicut et ego omnibus per omnia placeo'; adding the motive, 'Non quærens quod mihi utile est, sed quod multis, ut salvi fiant.'"[1]

XXI. "Of government the properties to unfold would seem in me to affect speech and discourse." I undertake not to instruct rulers, nor to follow the adventurous path of Occleve, who wrote *De Regimine Principum*, or of Lydgate, who composed the Governaunce of Princes. Yet nobility has conducted us to the throne of power, and we cannot retrace our steps until we have considered the principles of its foundation, as far as they are connected with the spirit and institutions of chivalry.

"The governing and being governed," says Aristotle, "is not merely to be classed with things unavoidable, but with those also which are beneficial. Immediately from their birth, some things are set apart for being governed, and some to have the power of governing; and there are many forms of being governed and of governing; for in all things throughout universal nature there are that which governs and that which is governed; not merely in all things that have life, but even in those which are without life there is a certain ruling power as a harmony."[2]

[1] S. Augustin. ad Darium Epist. CCXXXI.
[2] Polit. lib. I, c. 2.

Socrates thus examines Lysis: "'Tell me, O Lysis, do your father and mother greatly love you?' 'Yes, that they do, truly,' replied the youth. 'Therefore they wish you to become as happy as possible?' 'How could it be otherwise?' 'Does a serving-man, who can do nothing that he wishes, seem to you to be happy?' 'No, truly.' 'Therefore, if your father and mother wish you to be happy, it is clear they must also have such desires respecting you as will enable you to be happy.' 'Certainly.' 'Do they then suffer you to do whatever you like, and do they hinder you from nothing?' 'No, indeed, far otherwise, O Socrates, for they hinder me from many things.' 'What do you say? Wishing you to be happy, do they hinder you from doing what you wish? Answer me to this: if you should wish to mount into one of your father's chariots and take the reins, when he goes to contend, would he not permit you?' 'No, truly, he would not permit me.' 'How then?' 'My father has a hired servant to be charioteer.' 'What! do they rather permit a hired servant than you to do what he pleases with the horses, and, in addition, do they give him money for his pains? At least, I suppose they allow you to take charge of the mule-chariots and to manage the reins, and to take the whip and flog them?' 'A likely thing, indeed, that they should allow me to do so!' 'What, may no one whip them?' 'Yes, to be sure, the muleteer may.' 'Is he a servant or a free man?' 'A servant.' 'So then they seem to think more of a servant than of you their son, and they permit *him* to do many things which they will not allow you to touch, and he may do what he likes, and you cannot do what you like; and again answer me to this: do they allow you to be your own master or not?' 'Not they, indeed.' 'What, does any one command you?' 'Yes, this pedagogue here.' 'Is he also a

servant?' 'That he is, our own.' 'O awful calamity! a free man to be ruled by a slave! But what does this pedagogue do?' 'He takes me to school.' 'What, are there masters to rule over you?' 'There are, assuredly.' 'So your father gives you abundance of tyrants. But say, when you return home to your mother, does she permit you to do what you like, that you may be happy? to meddle with the wool and the spindle whilst she is weaving? Does she permit you to handle the comb, the shuttle, or any other of the instruments?' Here the lad began to laugh. 'By Jove, O Socrates, she would not only prevent me, but she would beat me soundly, if I were to lay a finger on them.' 'O Hercules! have you ever injured your father or mother?' 'Not I, truly.' 'But then, for what crime or cause do they so horridly hinder you from being happy and doing what you like; and why do they bring you up in such a way, day after day, that you are always obeying some one, and, in short, that you can never do what you like? You are not master of any thing, O Lysis; you have not power to do any thing which you desire!'"[1]

This dialogue is intended to expose the absurdity of the political sophists, who inflame the minds of men with a vague idea of a state of liberty, for which they are disqualified by the very constitution of their nature, insomuch that every attempt to acquire it is sure to occasion the loss, in some degree, of the real freedom which is essential to their happiness. Their ordinances are to maintain liberty, order, right, and justice, "quæ cum magnifice primo dici videntur, considerata minus probantur." The sense of each man, and the nature of things, and truth itself, discovered by experience,

[1] Plato, Lysis.

soon cry out from all sides, that they lead to oppression, discord, error, and injustice.

The form of government may be changed, and adapted to the various circumstances of time and the character of those who are to be governed; but the substantial power must always exist somewhere and be submitted to, whether with choice or from necessity. "Their chief—for they were obliged to give themselves one, in spite of their love for liberty," says Lévesque, speaking of the Teuchins, a band of ferocious rebels who devastated Auvergne and Poitou in 1384.[1] With such men, as with Gonzalo, "the latter end of their commonwealth forgets the beginning." No sovereignty; yet each would be king. Cicero shews, that in Rome the destruction of the regal power was only the abolishing a name, while the thing itself remained.[2] "Nothing," he says, "belongs more essentially to the condition of nature than rule or empire, without which neither a house, nor a state, nor a tribe, nor the human race, can stand, nor the whole nature of things—nor the world itself, for this has to obey God." Government does not result from the consent of those who are to be governed, any more than a father derives authority from his children, or a master from his servants, or a teacher from his scholars. "In every thing," says Plato, "that which rules is older than that which is ruled; that which leads than that which is led."[3] The error of the moderns has arisen from their supposing that the savage state was the original condition of men, and that the social or civilised is the result of compact or experience; whereas, on the contrary, it is this latter which presents the original condition of the human race, and what is termed the savage or natural state is

[1] La France sous les cinq prem. Valois, III, 39.
[2] De Legibus, lib. III, 7. [3] De Legibus.

the result of corruption and accident, which has destroyed the original and natural order of human society.

When we reflect for a moment upon the multitude of discordant elements which, in all society, are to be controlled; upon the jarring interests which are to be made to conspire; upon the concourse of base, selfish, and furious passions which are to be guarded against, appeased, and even chained down, as it were, with links of iron; upon the endless foreign enemies which are to be prevented from preying upon each internally agitated state; in short, when we consider the propensities of those who are to be governed, all of whom, as Aristotle says, "are inclined to be unjust and to injure whenever they have the power;"[1] it is an indication of superior penetration of mind to feel lost in astonishment at the success which attends such apparently weak and inadequate means, as are possessed by human governments, to secure the existence of a state. Montaigne had reason to say, that "the preservation of states is a thing which surpasses our understanding."[2] A certain jester of a king of Spain demanded of him, "If all should say 'no' to what your majesty commands, what is to be done?" If it had not been for the eternal provision of nature silently but irresistibly operating, in spite of the sophists and the whole tribe of politicians, this would have been the answer of the majority of men to every prescription and form of government, and mankind would not have long survived the decline of degrees, observances, customs, and laws, to their confounding contraries. The Christian philosophy imparts sublime views respecting the divine provisions to secure the duration of society. "What an astonishing example," says

[1] Rhetor. II. [2] Essais, III, 9.

Montaigne, "has the divine wisdom left us, that to establish the salvation of the human race, and to conduct this his glorious victory against death and sin, he should have acted only as if at the mercy of our political order; that he should have subjected his progress and the conduct of so great and salutary a matter to the blindness and injustice of our observations and customs, permitting the innocent blood of so many of his elect to flow, and enduring so great a loss of years, in order to ripen this inestimable fruit."[1]

Luis of Granada pursues the same train of thought: "The love of our own excellence is the cause of the greatest part of the troubles and dissensions in the world; no man being content to keep in the rear, but all pushing and trying to be in the van. It is for this reason that the Son of God coming into the world made such an account of humility, that it would seem as if he had only come into the world to impart it. So the Church on Palm-Sunday chants that God had sent his Son into the world to clothe himself in our flesh and to die upon the cross, to give an example of humility to the world; keeping silence as to every thing else, as if he had only come for that object; for the whole of his ministry, from his conception to his death upon the cross, was an example of humility. He chose for the ignominy of his death the celebrated city of Jerusalem, and for the glory of his birth the little village of Bethlehem. Man was created to serve his Creator; but earth's proud child, arrogant man, said within himself, 'I do not wish to serve him.' 'I wish, then,' said the everlasting King, 'to serve you. Place yourself at table, I will wait on you and will wash your feet.'"[2]

"Who was subject?" asks St. Bernard; "God.

[1] Essais, I, 22. [2] Catechism, part III, c. 10.

To whom? To man. He whom the powers of heaven obey was subject to Mary; therefore, man, do thou learn to obey. Earth, learn to be subject, and thou, dust, be content to submit." "There is not an offence of consequence committed against the laws of a good government which is not a grievous sin against the laws of God." This is what Muratori says.[1] The predisposition of the chivalrous spirit to acquiesce in the wisdom of this obedience, might have been formerly noticed among the instances which were produced to shew that it was peculiarly suited to embrace the Christian discipline. In fact, there will be occasion to observe hereafter, that chivalry and youth preferred obedience to command, however incredible such a sentiment may appear to those modern politicians, who, like drunken sailors, are all quarrelling for the chief rule, and each contending for the helm; however extravagant such a position may have seemed to the inventors of the most approved of the modern systems of education, who thought, no doubt, that they were conferring a great benefit upon youth, by inventing a process which would give command and authority to children:—monstrous, one might perhaps say unholy, contrivance of reason! to reverse the plan of Nature, and to subvert her gracious scheme of beneficence and order!

In the meantime I assert that it is no novel or extravagant position to hold, that the post of obedience among the crowd may be the choice of generous and heroic men. Plato says, that if there were a state composed solely of virtuous men, it would be as much an object of contention among them not to be invested with command, as it is now who should be able to obtain it.[2] He adds, that the wishing to be a lord or ruler, when there is no

[1] On Public Happiness. [2] De Repub. I.

necessity for our taking command, should be regarded as an infamy. Sophocles and Euripides both speak of the desire of rule as indicating a want of wisdom or virtue;[1] though Euripides was famous for the iniquitous saying, that if justice were ever to be violated, it should be for the sake of reigning.[2] When the doctrine of the materialists, which reduces morality to self-interest, has been introduced into a country, its first effect is to disturb public order, and to divide subjects, by exciting a boundless desire of rule. Every one wishes to engross the command; no one will obey. Power is fought for with rage, and the distracted state would fall a victim to factions, if the minds of men had not become ripe, through degradation, for enduring every thing, insomuch that they precipitate themselves towards despotism, for it is in anarchy that the principles of slavery are prepared. Such is the double effect arising when manners are corrupted with impiety. The pride of men is so greatly irritated, that the gentlest government becomes odious to them; and yet so completely have they forgotten the noble sentiment of their own dignity, that nothing seems intolerable to them, nothing disgusts or astonishes them in the most ferocious tyranny. The great French writer, whose words I repeat, seems to contemplate a state of society like that which the wise Athenian, in Plato, traced to the influence of popular leaders, who taught the people to conceive themselves qualified to judge every thing. This liberty gradually led them to greater excesses. At first they declared that they would no longer be slaves to magistrates. Then they would not be slaves to their fathers and mothers and elders; and, lastly, they scorned to submit to the laws; and, having proceeded so far, they no

[1] Œdip. Tyran. 586. Hippolytus, 1013. [2] Phœnissæ.

longer cared for oaths, or for pledged faith, or for the gods, and so they displayed and imitated *τὴν λεγομένην παλαιὰν Τιτανικὴν φύσιν*.[1]

Hippodamus, the Pythagorean, in his treatise upon government, supposes the evil to proceed in an inverse order to this, as he teaches the necessity of guarding against the sophists; "for it is not a common injury," he observes, "but the greatest of all calamities which the discourses of the sophists produce in men's minds, when they dare to move any thing contrary to the common notions of the gods and of human affairs, *παρὰ τὰς κοινὰς ἐννοίας*, either denying that there is a God, or affirming that he does not regard men; for such paradoxes give rise to madness and injustice."[2]

It is to these common notions, these universal sacred traditions, opposed to the private speculations of reasoners in every age, that the wise ancients had recourse for the foundation of all principles relative to human society, as well as to the great truths of religion; as when Cicero says, "I tell you that I have learned better things concerning the worship of the immortal gods, from the pontifical law and from the customs of our ancestors, from those jugs which Numa has left us, and to which Lælius alludes in that golden little speech, than from all the reasoning of the stoics."[3]

I shall have occasion to return to this subject, when defending the philosophy of the middle ages (for, in opposition to M. Cousin, I must persist in believing that they possessed a philosophy), and it will then be my endeavour to shew a most important truth—that, even under the light of the Christian revelation, the human mind has not been able to prove that the importance of individual reason can

[1] Plato, Leges, III. [2] Stobæi Florileg. II, 127.
[3] De Naturâ Deorum, lib. III, 17.

be extended beyond the limits ascribed to it by Plato and Cicero; the latter of whom, not content with this preference of Numa's jugs, proceeded to say, that the quick movement of thought, the sagacity and penetration, which we call reason, is accompanied with such evil, when it is exercised in a spirit of independence, that it seems as if it would have been better for the human race to have been altogether deprived of it:[1] in which judgment the history of philosophy, from the beginning down to these days, would oblige us all to acquiesce, if it were not for the ignorance and ingratitude of many, who are not aware that, before Christianity, men were indebted for whatever degree of truth they possessed to tradition and the universal reason, and who have become insensible to the benefits which have been conferred upon them by the religion of Jesus Christ.

With respect to the form of government, it is obvious that chivalry will accommodate itself to times and to places, so as to admit whatever system may have been established; for we may conclude—though in opposition to many moderns, who affirm that the whole is before the part, society before the man—what Plato held, that government had nothing to do with causing the virtue of great men; "for there are always," he said, "some few divine minds among the many, growing up not more numerously in well-governed states than in those which are ill governed."[2] However, in some respects, it does appear as if chivalry had a connection with monarchy. The reverence with which the Homeric heroes speak of the persons of kings,[3] and the preference which they profess for the government of one king, to whom Jove should give the sceptre of justice,[4] may

[1] De Naturâ Deorum, lib. III, 27.
[2] De Legibus, XII.
[3] Od. XVI, 400.
[4] Il. II, 204.

be cited in evidence, as far as regards the sentiments of early times. Hesiod, Plato, Aristotle, and Apollonius, are for a monarchy, as being the form of government taught by nature, obedience to which is the most ancient law ;[1] in which opinion, the early fathers of the Church, St. Cyprian, St. Jerome, and others, seem to have coincided.

"The first society," says Cicero, "is in marriage, the second in children, then in a whole family, which is the beginning, and, as it were, the seminary of a state. Then follow other conjunctions ; and as one house cannot contain them all, they are induced to found others, as it were colonies ; then follow other marriages and affinities, quæ propagatio et soboles origo est rerum publicarum."[2] Aristotle says, in like manner, that a father ruling over his sons is a monarchy.[3] According to the sentiments of the Homeric chivalry, old age conferred a kind of kingly power. Agamemnon reminds Achilles, that, setting aside his own rank, he is more kingly than he, from being his elder.[4] And that this principle was fully admitted in our own heroic age, appears evident from the constant language which prevailed. Thus, in *L'Arbre des Batailles* it is said that the son is to assist his father as "son seigneur naturel." It is a remarkable sentence of Pausanias, that the earliest governments of the Greeks, as of all other people, were monarchical ;[5] and certainly the Greek poets seem to have conceived a noble idea of a king.[6] In Pindar we can observe not only a deep aversion for that predominance of the democratic principle which gave cause in his time to so many violent commotions throughout Greece, and in the end to consequences yet more destructive ; but also his evident partiality for the regal form of government, and that

[1] Stobæus, lib. XVIII, 191.
[2] De Officiis, lib. I, 17.
[3] Ethic. lib. VIII, 10.
[4] Il. IX, 160.
[5] Lib. IX, 1.
[6] Sophocles, Œdipus Tyrannus, 93, 444.

influence of the nobility, which remained always so powerful among the Doric states. That a king could not separate his own interest from that of his people, was the opinion ascribed by Xenophon to Chrysantas;[1] and the words with which Darius concluded his speech in favour of monarchy, as related by Herodotus, form a remarkable evidence of an ancient conviction. "For to comprehend all things in a few words, whence was it that we acquired freedom, and from whose hand? Was it from the people, or from an oligarchy, or from a monarch? I am of opinion that we became free through the government of one man."[2] Frederick Schlegel has observed, that "monarchy and aristocracy do not appear among any other people of antiquity in a light at once so mild and so illustrious as in the empire of Persia; a government which, in whatever way its power might be abused by particular princes, was, on the whole, founded on the basis of elevation of sentiment and purity of manners."[3] Indeed, it must be confessed that the republican form of government, though noble and dignified, was so far contrary to the mind of chivalry, inasmuch as it was of itself inimical in the highest degree to the influence and importance of women, and to the peaceful enjoyment of private life: for its evident tendency was to fill the whole heart and soul of men with matters of public moment, with just or false views of patriotism, and, above all, to engross the whole attention of each individual with the peculiar political tenets or prejudices of the sect or party to which he belonged. Whatever opinion may be entertained as to the general tendency of a republican government, its effects upon individuals can never be particularly favourable to the growth or preser-

[1] Cyropædia, VIII, 1. [2] Herod. lib. III, 82.
[3] Hist. of Lit. I, 40.

vation of those elevated and generous sentiments which constitute chivalry: for as Plutarch, speaking of Cicero, justly says, "The passion for celebrity (which is so much strengthened and extended under that system) has great power to efface the impressions of philosophy, and to infuse the passions of the vulgar into the minds of public men, who necessarily have a connexion and commerce with the multitude; unless they take care, while they engage in affairs, to attend to the business only, without imbibing the passions that are the common consequence of engaging in that business." The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense. What a contrast to the mind of chivalry is presented, not only in the conduct, but even in the orations of most public men! How can this be accounted for? The Roman philosopher supplies the best answer, in alluding to the vanity of Demosthenes. "Apud alios loqui videlicet didicerat, non multum ipse secum."[1] As for the democratic doctrines, they are utterly opposed to all the principles of the ancient as well as of the Christian chivalry. "I pardon the people," says Xenophon, "for preferring a democracy; but whoever, not being of the people, wishes to live under a democracy, is prepared to act unjustly, and knows that a wicked man can more easily escape detection under such a government than under any other."[2] In no state are the best men favourable to democratic rule, but always the worst are its advocates; for "like favours like."[3] The opinions of Socrates and those of the greater part of his scholars were openly inimical to democracy. Xenophon and Plato praise, almost with the zeal of political partisans, the constitution of every state in whose institutions the aristocratical principle was

[1] Cicero, Tusc. Qu. lib. V, 36. [2] De Rep. Athen. c. 2.
[3] Id. 3.

predominant. Always in alliance with these sentiments was a disinclination to teach men that all persons should feel themselves engaged to a political life. Aristotle mentions one who would not suffer his son to take part in public affairs, saying, "If you speak justly, men will hate you; if unjustly, the gods."[1] The great sages of old, from Thales the Milesian down to Anaxagoras, men like Pittacus and Bias, as Socrates remarked to Hippias, kept aloof from public affairs; and though, in our heroic ages, there is evidence from the ancient chronicles to know, as M. de Barante observes, that public opinion and the general wish of subjects, exercised an immense power;[2] it is also certain that men's thoughts and conversation were but little occupied with politics, that "sad refuge of restless minds, averse from business and from study."[3] A contrary disposition and mode of life, while it would have been incompatible with that leisure which the ancient philosophers supposed necessary to the attainment,[4] and which we may still regard as required for the preservation, of truth, would probably have added but very little either to the virtue or to the happiness of their country; for, in truth, the prosperity of states depends more upon the hearts than upon the reason of subjects, however ardent they may be in the invention of schemes to promote it. Berkeley, who may probably be regarded as an authority not altogether beneath the attention of "a thinking people," says on one occasion, "I question whether every one can frame a notion of the public good, much less judge of the means to promote it." What would become of society if it were depending for security upon the wisdom even of those heads which have been trained to take care of its interests, and

[1] Rhetor. II, 23. [2] Hist. des Ducs de Bourgogne, pref.
[3] Landor. [4] Max. Tyr. XXII, 3.

invested with power to execute their wishes, or upon the efforts of those hostile ranks who are to keep up a perpetual combat in the bosom of the state, in order, as they suppose, to preserve it from corruption? Prometheus could steal fire and the common arts of life from Vulcan and Minerva; but the political wisdom was beyond his grasp, for that was with Jupiter, and Prometheus had not courage to mount into his citadel to secure it for men.[1] The moderns, indeed, do not feel the necessity of mounting so high; but there is no proof as yet that it can be obtained more easily by blustering and violence than by stealth. However, notwithstanding the doubts of Berkeley, in Catholic times there was one consistent idea very prevalent concerning the nature of the public good, and an art of government to promote that object, which was very simple. To understand this, we must observe, that our ancestors concluded, with St. Augustine, that a state cannot be happy upon any other ground than that upon which the happiness of a man depends, since a state is nothing but a concourse of men.[2] It was known that the very heathens would condemn the idea that a state could be profligate and prosperous, since, as St. Augustine says of Scipio, "neque enim censebat ille felicem esse rempublicam stantibus mœnibus, ruentibus moribus."[3] And Aristotle expressly shews, that what constitutes the happiness of a man constitutes also that of a state.[4] Maximus of Tyre applies the principle, and says, alluding to the history of Greece, "What a train of evils followed evil! But if those who were at any time injured had known, that to those who injured them the greatest possible evil that could happen was their own injustice, far greater than war or the demolition of walls, and the

[1] Plato, Protagoras.
[2] De Civitate Dei, lib. I, 15.
[3] Ib. I, 33.
[4] Polit. lib. VII, 2. Ethic. N. lib. I, 2.

laying waste of lands, and the overthrow of government, Greece would not have suffered such calamities." "The Athenians besiege Potidæa. O Spartan, suffer this; they will soon repent: do not imitate the evil; be not a partaker of their crimes."[1] "I hesitate not to affirm, that the crime of him who retaliates is greater than that of the power who first injures."[2]

When Zaleucus of Locria, the disciple of Pythagoras, was ordained legislator, and commissioned to frame new laws for his country, he began first, says Diodorus, with the heavenly gods; for he affirmed, that the belief in the gods was to be the foundation of all laws; and the first thing to be secured was the worship of the gods, as the authors of all good to men;[3] without which, Cicero was of opinion there could be no faith, or justice, or society, amongst men.[4] Isocrates, in his admirable oration περὶ εἰρήνης, maintained that peace, moderation, content, justice, and virtue, constituted the happiness of a state; and he affirmed that it was even more important to states than to individuals to avoid crime and to pursue virtue; "for a man," he said, "might elude punishment by a speedy death, but states being immortal, must inevitably receive, sooner or later, the recompense of their injustice from men and from the gods."

According to these principles the public good was at once known, when the object was determined for which all wise men should pray. What, then, did they pray for? As the philosopher remarked: "Socrates prayed constantly, Pythagoras prayed, and Plato prayed; but for what did they pray? For money, or that they might have power to rule the Athenians? Far otherwise; but they prayed

[1] XVIII, 7.
[2] Id. 8.
[3] Diodorus, lib. XII, 20.
[4] De Naturâ Deorum, lib. I, 2.

for what they received; virtue of soul and peace of life, and an innocent existence, and a death full of hope: admirable gifts, which descend from the gods."[1] Τὰ δὲ καλὰ καὶ τὰ δίκαια, περὶ ὧν ἡ πολιτικὴ σκοπεῖται, says Aristotle.[2] The moderns will smile to hear that the greatest of the ancient writers on politics held honour and justice to be the objects of political science; but in the middle ages this position would not have been ridiculed. In Catholic times men believed that the spirit of Christianity ought to be the spirit of government; that the defence of virtue and holiness ought to be its object, and that the law of God ought to be its rule. "If we wish to consider the end of all civil government," says Bartolommeo Arnigio,[3] "which is no other than to live well according to the divine pleasure, afin de s'acheminer à Dieu, there is no surer rule, or more certain way, than the religion of Jesus Christ."

Frederick Schlegel observes that Machiavelli was the first who introduced into modern and Christian Europe the fashion of reasoning and deciding on politics exactly as if Christianity had had no existence, or rather as if there had been no such thing as a Deity, or moral justice in the world. Before his day, the common faith of Christianity had formed a bond of connexion, and been considered as the fundamental principle of all government among the nations of Europe, and the people of Christendom regarded themselves as forming, in some sort, one family. The common opinion among mankind was, that as men themselves ought to serve their God, so it was their duty also to love and obey the princes appointed by heaven to rule over them; and that in this sense the right of kings was divine. All the doctrines of legislation and government still

[1] Max. Tyr. XI, 8. [2] Ethic. Nicom. I, 3.
[3] Les Veilles, p. 240.

reposed upon the invisible foundation of the Church; so that in countries where this had been overthrown, it was natural and unavoidable that a new and different plan of government should be professed. Lord Bacon says that in all wise human government they that sit at the helm do more happily bring their purposes about, and insinuate more easily into the minds of the people by pretext and oblique courses, than by direct methods; so that all sceptres and maces of authority ought in very deed to be crooked in the upper end.[1]

The Catholic principle of government had nothing to do with this crooked policy, of which the world has had subsequently such long experience. We are indebted to the modern philosophy for those able statesmen, politicians, men that would circumvent God. When the overthrow of religious unity had destroyed the bond of the elder political union, Hugo Grotius gave to self-destroying Europe an universal and composing law for all her nations; but, as Friedrich Schlegel justly says, the former "was an irremediable loss." The position of the Abbé de la Mennais must be admitted, that "the school of doubt has produced nothing but cold dissertations, without life, on all the great objects of meditation. It is only in the school of Catholicism that we find a system of political science capable of inspiring eloquence. The reason is, that here morality is the whole of policy; here Providence is the great governor of the revolutions of men. God is the foundation of society, religion the bond; laws have authority, duties their sanction; men learn the reason of obedience, and the rule of freedom." "The Christian principle of government permits, in the first place, that all historical grounds should be ascertained, as also the imperfection in its law;

[1] On the Wisdom of the Ancients.

and therein it is essentially opposed to the revolutionary struggle, which always begins with ignorance of historic grounds and historic axioms, and which in its inmost ways is at all times anti-historic. Besides this, there always is in every Christian system of rule a formal and acknowledged principle of justice; and, moreover, the Christian philosophy, and the views of human life which proceed from it, are much more favourable to true freedom, in the highest sense of the word, when we understand the spiritual, intellectual, and inward freedom which must always precede that which is the outward and civil, if this last is to be productive; according to the sentence, 'He only is free whom the Son makes free;' to comprehend which, it must be observed that the Son makes no man free, otherwise than as he was himself free, namely, by obedience, and by making the full offering of himself, in obedience to his Father."[1]

The great philosophers and thinkers of antiquity endeavoured to provide against the democratic spirit, of which they had beheld such fearful examples, by means of an aristocratical power; for the principles of a monarchy, according to the system of the middle ages, were then unknown, since these took their origin in the grounds of the Christian religion.[2] Of such a monarchy, the early state of every kingdom in Europe will furnish an example; but I have assumed the illustrious name of Godfrey, as in a manner symbolical of that most Christian government, with which the chivalry of the middle ages was so closely connected. It was with this view that Godfrey was brought forward last in the majestic procession of perfect or ideal chivalry. The author of the knightly book, entitled *Les Neuf Preux,*

[1] Schlegel, Philosophie des Lebens, 403–4.
[2] Philosophie des Lebens, 410.

commences his life of Godfrey, the last hero of this noble fellowship, with expressing the delight with which he hailed such a conclusion of his labours. When "the pilgrim," he says, "who, during a long space of time, has wandered on his way, hoping to reach the spot where his affections conduct him, through forests, and mountains, and deserts, in which he must suffer many toils and hardships, receives the news of his being now at length within a day's journey of the end where he is to obtain his palm, he feels such joy that he derives new strength, and forgets all his past sorrow; in like manner, after having with great diligence surveyed the lives of the eight princes preceding, and being now to record the prowess and valiance of the preux Godefroy de Bouillon, what joy does not my heart feel to perfect such a work in celebrating him!"[1] To some minds there is something beyond expression venerable and sublime in the view of that Christian kingdom of Jerusalem, whose assizes and good usages formed the earliest state-law of the middle ages. If we set aside the question relative to the merits of its first establishment, there is no moment of history more cheering to the lover of humanity, and more admirable to the imagination of a Christian, than that which beheld the exaltation of a throne upon the simple foundation of love and justice, to be the protection of the innocent, the guardian of sanctity, and the symbol of that eternal kingdom which awaited, in a future life, the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. It is for rich music's tongue to unfold such views of human government. Who could refrain from tears of joy and veneration when he beheld the affecting solemnities with which the Church consecrated Godfrey, that humble disciple of Jesus Christ, who refused to wear the

[1] Ed. Paris, 1507.

emblem of royalty; addressing him in the words of the established form, "Take this wand as the emblem of your sacred power, in order that you may be able to strengthen the weak, sustain those who are in danger of falling, correct the vicious, and direct the good in the ways of salvation. Take the sceptre as the rule of divine equity which governs the good, and punishes the wicked; let it teach you to love justice, and to detest iniquity."[1] Who more worthy of such a charge than Godfrey, who was "moult preudhomme et sage et moult aymant Dieu et gens d'esglise"? In surpassing state he walked the last of all the nine, who bore the noblest palms, majestic in aspect, yet courteous, and bearing a crown of thorns in memory of his Saviour.[2] "He was more capable of receiving the royal honour than any of the others," says an ancient chronicle, "for his private servants could find no fault in him, excepting that he used to remain too long in the church after mass, and that he used to study too much the holy gospels, and the lives of saints, and of the ancient fathers; which blame, those who were to elect him, regarded as a proof of his virtue."[3] What breast would not have felt that holy rapture experienced by the Crusaders when they heard the first bells toll over the holy city? a sound which had never before been imagined in Jerusalem,[4] and which, like the music of angels in the sky, announced to men the blessed tidings of forgiveness and peace.

The Christian kings of Christian states were to feel no interest separate from that of their faithful subjects. Witness the last commands of Godfrey of

[1] Ducange, voc. Baculus regius.

[2] Les Neuf Preux: Paris, 1507.

[3] Les Faitz et Gestes du preux Godefroy de Bouillon et de ses chevalereux Freres, f. 96.

[4] Albert. Aq. VI, 40, quoted by Wilken, II, 4.

Bouillon on his deathbed, who, regarding more the peace of Jerusalem than the splendour of his own race, charged the Patriarch not to elect him a successor from the Lotharingian family.[1] Again, "Do not elect for the new master of the order my brother Ulrich, the intrepid daring warrior, the valiant hero; for I fear lest his wild warlike ardour should involve the order in irreparable injury." These were the last noble words of the grand master Konrad von Jungingen on his death-bed, in the castle of Marienburg.[2] The last words of King Charles V. of France, addressed to the crown on his death-bed, as related by Froissart; the motto of Rudolph of Hapsburg, "Melius bene imperare quam regnum ampliare"; the letters from King Dom Joam of Portugal and of the Infante Dom Luis to Dom Joam de Castro, their viceroy of India,—convey a sublime view of the principles which lie at the foundation of a Christian government, acting upon the profound sense of the vanity of false ambition, and the resolution to seek first and above all things the glory of God, and the conversion of the world to truth and holiness.[3] They certainly go far to justify the high opinion which was entertained of the surpassing excellence of kingly government, when conducted upon the principles of the Christian religion.[4]

It remains to speak of the chivalrous principle which induced temporal rulers to come forward in assisting and protecting the spiritual power. This was the simple and natural consequence of these rulers having embraced the Christian religion. A heathen philosopher, indeed, chose to banish from

[1] Wilken, Geschichte der Kreuzzüge, II, 69.
[2] Voight, Geschichte Marienburgs, p. 246.
[3] The Life of Dom Joam de Castro, by Jacinto Freire de Andrada.
[4] Æneas Sylvius de Ortu et Authoritat. Imp.

his republic on earth the very men with whom he hoped to live and converse for ever in heaven; for he can conceive no higher consolation to cheer the last moments of his life than the prospect of his consorting with Orpheus, Musæus, Homer, and Hesiod,[1]—men whom he had formerly excepted from having any share in the benefits of his legal order; but such inconsistency could never have been expected from a Christian who had to govern a Christian state. How could a Christian emperor have rejected the prayer of St. Boniface, when this holy missionary implored the assistance of the civil power to co-operate with his endeavour to convert the Germans? for he said, "without the patronage of the prince of the Franks I can neither rule the people, nor defend the priests or deacons, the monks or holy virgins; nor shall I be able, without their commands, to prohibit in Germany the rites of the pagans and the sacrileges of their idols." How could a duke of Savoy and a king of France, being Catholic Christians, refuse to grant the prayer of St. Francis de Sales to prevent the religious innovators of the country of Chablais and Gex from plundering and massacring the Catholics? The duty even of self-defence may have sometimes justified the interference of the civil power. England, France, the Low Countries, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, and Poland, became the mournful stages whereupon bloody tragedies were acted; or rather, as an old writer says, "the very shambles wherein were slaughtered many thousand Christians, under pretence of introducing the new religion." "It seems that Germany even swims in blood," cries Luther; "but my Christ liveth and reigneth, and I will live and reign."[2] They violently and illegally deposed their kings, came into the field against them in huge

[1] Plato, Apolog. [2] Loc. Com. Class. IV, c. 30, fol. 55.

armies, and took possession of their cities and territories. Hear how the great St. Augustin writes respecting men who condemned Christian rulers for defending the Catholics from the schismatics and heretics of that age: "As for what they say, that the Apostles did not seek assistance from the kings of the earth, they do not consider how different were the circumstances of those times. What emperor then believed in Christ? Who would have made laws to serve them against impiety, when the prophecy was still fulfilling—'Quare fremuerunt gentes? Adstiterunt reges terræ et principes convenerunt in unum adversus Dominum et adversus Christum ejus:' as yet what was added in the same Psalm had not begun to apply—'Et nunc reges intelligite, erudimini qui judicatis terram. Servite Domino in timore, et exsultate ei cum tremore.' In what manner could kings serve the Lord with fear unless they prohibited those things which are contrary to the commands of the Lord with religious severity? There was one mode of serving him proper for a man, and another for a king; as a man, one served him by living faithfully; but as a king, one served him by prescribing laws to promote justice and to correct evil. It was thus that Ezechias served, destroying the groves and temples of the idols; thus did Josias; thus did the king of the Ninevites, ordaining that the whole city should endeavour to appease God; thus did Darius; thus did Nebuchodonosor, prohibiting all blasphemy; thus it was that kings served the Lord in their character of kings when they did those things to serve him which they could not have done if they had not been kings. In the time of the Apostles, when the former prophecy was fulfilling, it was not possible that impieties should be prohibited by law; but when the hour came in which this also was to be fulfilled, 'Et adorabunt eum omnes reges terræ, omnes gentes

servient illi,' who, with a sound mind, could say to kings, 'Do not trouble yourself whether the Church of your Lord be guarded or attacked in your kingdom; it is no affair of yours, whether in your kingdom any one chooses to be religious or to commit sacrilege, to lead a chaste or an immoral life?' But why should adulteries be punished by laws, and sacrileges permitted? or because some things are to be corrected with mildness, are they, therefore, to be altogether neglected? It is better that men should be led by doctrine to worship God, than by the fear of punishment; who doubts that? but because the former is better than the latter, this is not to be altogether neglected; for we find continually, by experience, that it is for the advantage of many that they should be sometimes induced by fear; for though those men are better whom love guides, nevertheless there are many whom fear preserves from destruction. Before the promulgation of these laws in Africa, it seemed to some of the brethren, among whom I was one, that although the fury of the Donatists raged so terribly, yet it was not to be asked of rulers that heresy should be suppressed by compelling those who supported it to return to the Church, but only that their extravagant violence should be restrained, so that they might not dare to oppress those who held Catholic truth, while no one should be obliged to embrace it, lest we should gain false and dissembling Catholics. But the horrible violence of these men in massacring a bishop of the Catholic Church prevented the emperor from attending to our petition; so that these laws were ordained, which inflicted not capital punishment, which would have been contrary to Christian mildness, but pecuniary fines upon those who persisted in such cruel heresies. Nor can we wonder that this barbarous murder of the bishop should have induced a Christian emperor to make such laws; even

the Apostle Paul did not hesitate to implore the assistance of the Roman laws, proclaiming himself to be a Roman citizen, and entitled to the protection of Cæsar; which sufficiently shews what Christian emperors ought to do when they should find the Church oppressed by adversaries."[1] In the time of St. Augustine, and even in that of St. Justin and Athenagoras, the promotion of all religions, however that policy might sound as announcing liberty to all and maintaining the right of all, meant precisely, as in the latter ages, the liberty and the right of all to persecute the Catholic Church; which it was natural Christian rulers should be unwilling to concede. Bossuet, in his Sermon on the Unity of the Church, points out the mutual assistance afforded by the Church and the State to each other, both conspiring to establish the order of God; though perhaps it is too true, as the Abbé de la Mennais says, "that the Church has no reason to be very anxious for securing this close alliance. The more she is separated from all that passes with time, the more she acquires internal vigour. It is the consequence of human passions that sovereigns should always be inclined to emancipate themselves from her influence. No advantages which the state can offer will ever compensate for the dangers of the war which she must eternally maintain to preserve her independence; she has always more to fear than to hope from princes. Her true force is the confidence of the weak, whom she protects in maintaining the law of justice; their love constitutes her power." With respect to the occasional collision of the spiritual and temporal powers, the main point lay in the spirit and dispositions which were then evinced; for according to the reasonable view which was to be taken of both the one and the other of these

[1] S. Augustinus de Correctione Donatistarum, lib. ad Bonifacium, Ep. CLXXXV.

powers, both had the highest sanction, a divine foundation and a holy character, each in its place and sphere. The mistake of those who were sincere in their hostility to the power of the Holy See consisted, like perhaps all the other delusions of men, rather in the false and extravagant application of truth than in the falsehood of the principles which they kept foremost; for every beam of truth is so ethereal and heavenly that it can only be enjoyed when men are humble enough to follow it at a distance, and as it were with eyes but half directed towards it, and to wait for its appearance as if it were a star which only shines at intervals through the mist of night. It disappears totally and is lost to those who attempt to measure it with the naked eye, so as to ascertain its dimensions by means of their unassisted vision; nay, the sight itself is darkened when they are so rash and inquisitive as to persist in looking straight at it. If we should desire an example of the opposition which the spiritual power might make to the temporal in personal cases, we shall find one in the history of the patron saint of the kingdom of Bohemia, which, as Friedrich Schlegel remarks, "furnishes a simple and beautiful instance of a noble and unexceptionable opposition against the injustice of the temporal power in the person of the prince; only through such an opposition as this did Christianity in early times take its wonderful commencement, and increase in security and extent until it became at length the religion of the whole civilized world." [1] Yet assuredly the faithful were not to suppose that, to obey the order of God, it was necessary to abandon all means of defence and security against injustice; in all ages, there have been, no doubt, men who would have recommended to the spiritual power a course of

[1] Philosophie des Lebens.

servility and absolute acquiescence in whatever measures might be proposed by civil rulers; men who would always have one text, "non habemus regem nisi Cæsarem;" who would have restrained the power of the Church to abstractions which they would call the spiritual power, requiring, as Rubichon says, "that an ecclesiastic should have a soul without a body, because they, being gross materialists, had a body without a soul."[1] Their cry under a Henry II would be, that men ought to obey the king rather than the vocation of God; and under a Philippe le Bel they would require innocent men to be judged guilty, and suppressed per viam expedientiæ,[2] or, as was then declared, per provisionis potius quam condemnationis viam; under a constitutional king they would procure an ordinance proclaiming, that in order to assist religion, bishops and priests should not be permitted to teach, though commanded to teach by Jesus Christ. It is the peculiar characteristic of despotism to require that the spiritual and temporal power should be united in one hand, in one centre-point and chief. Whenever the empire in the middle ages ceased to remain true to its simple Christian origin, the iron character of the Ghibellines and the peculiarly mild party of the great Gwelfs appeared in opposition to each other.

In a political point of view, this question has been decided of late by learned men, even on the side of the moderns, very differently from the manner in which it was distorted by the famous Robertson. Of this, the history and apology of Pope Gregory the VIIth, by John Voigt, a Lutheran professor, is a remarkable instance.[3] Even with respect to the influence of principles upon works of

[1] De l'Action du Clergé, p. 208.
[2] Baluz. Vitæ P. P. Av. I, 590.
[3] Hildebrand als Papst Gregorius der Siebente und sein Zeitalter: Weimar, 1815.

genius and poetry, the side which men choose in determining this question has been shewn to be no matter of indifference. Friedrich Schlegel justly objects to Dante's perpetual Ghibellinism, though his family had always distinguished itself on the opposite side. The Ghibelline party aimed at nothing but the establishment of merely worldly dominion. It is a race of men always existing, whose deeds are not within the leaf of pity writ; men who expect the whole salvation of mankind from dominion, founded entirely upon worldly principles, and who wish to deny altogether the power of that unseen influence, which is, however, sure to make its existence known whenever there is occasion for its exercise. Men of this description are characterised by the docility and submissiveness with which they render themselves up as weak masses, ready to assume any shape which it may please that despotism to impress, whose dignity is increased in their eyes by every new instance of its oppressiveness. Such were many of the supporters of the Gallican doctrines in France, under Louis XIV.

Christ established the strict obligation of paying to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar; yet soon after, he was charged with disloyalty, as if he forbade tribute to be paid to Cæsar. So also, the Catholic Church, which, by Clement XIV, addressed all the Catholic bishops of the world as follows,—"Be careful that those whose instruction in the law of the Gospel is committed to your charge be made sensible, from their very infancy, of the sacred obligation of loyalty to their kings, of respect to their authority, and of submission to their laws, not only for wrath, but for conscience-sake,"—is calumniated by men of these principles, and charged with disloyalty to Cæsar. Yet even the heathens would not have confounded things so essentially distinct as the obe-

dience which is due to the civil, and that which men owe to the spiritual power. The Pythagoreans, who required men to shew such reverence to their parents, enforced the duty of disobeying them if they required any thing manifestly against heaven. "Your father," they said, "forbids you to apply to philosophy; but the common father of all men and gods, Jove, calls upon you and excites you to apply to it."[1] Cicero says, that "it is most absurd to suppose that all things are just which are found in the laws and institutions of a state. If all the Athenians should take pleasure in having tyrannical laws, ought we on that account to suppose that such laws are just? There is no such power," he continues, "in the sentence and command of fools, that by their vote the nature of things can be reversed. The law did not begin when first written, but when it first had existence, that is, when the divine mind first had existence."[2]

It was in accordance with these eternal truths, and with the revealed principles of Christian freedom, that the Church prescribed a rule of government to princes and to subjects. "Obey the king, but in the sense of the Apostle," said one of the holiest popes that Providence ever raised up to conduct the Church of Christ; "be subject to his virtues, not to his vices; be subject propter Deum, et non contra Deum."

With respect to the interposition which the popes were occasionally required to exercise during the middle ages, however injurious some persons may suppose instances of collision between the two powers to have been to the interests of the Church, there can be no doubt as to its having been instrumental, in those ages, to the happiness and peace of Europe. Being sensible that, under Christian rulers,

[1] Stobæi Florileg. III, 122. [2] De Legibus, lib. I, 15; II, 4.

and according to the laws of Christian states, the duty of civil allegiance and submission had limits, men thought it right to be guided by their chief pastor, and to him they ascribed the office of determining the point, beyond which the extravagance of tyranny would render resistance lawful. Such a power could no longer be exercised with benefit, when the religious unity was dissolved by the progress of the new opinions. Mankind, therefore, have had recourse to other expedients. Princes make war upon each other at their pleasure, and subjects rebel as their passions dictate; and more princes were dispossessed of the whole or a large part of their dominions by the assumed liberty of the people, and by the insurrections of their subjects, within the first fifty years after the new mode was proclaimed, than the popes had been called upon to depose during the preceding 1500 years of their supremacy.

In general it may be remarked, that whatever was peculiarly mild and favourable to the poor in the governments of Europe, was more or less to be ascribed to the influence of the Church. Wherever it had the sovereign dominion, the people enjoyed a degree of exemption from burdens, which seemed to the philosophers of the last century as injurious to their habits of industry,[1] and even evinced a virtue which was elsewhere less observable.[2] Even writers the most unconnected with spiritual influence are willing to acknowledge the success with which the clergy exerted their power in the cause of society. Gibbon says that the French monarchy was created by the bishops of France; and Guizot is struck with the political wisdom which guided the clergy of Spain in the council of Toledo, as

[1] Swinburne's Travels from Bayonne to Marseilles, II, 439.
[2] Görres, Rom wie es in Wahrheit ist.

evinced in the laws of the Visigoths, which were, he says, evidently framed not by barbarians, but by the clergy, whom he terms "the philosophers of the day." Unlike their contemporary legislators, they determined that all men, barbarians and Romans, freedmen and leuds, were of equal value; and instead of compurgatory oaths and judiciary combats, ordained the proof by witnesses and regular examination.[1] With respect to the influence of the ancient governments upon letters and philosophy, "the principle that the Reformation was productive of liberty of thought is one," says Friedrich Schlegel, "that can scarcely be defended now. The near and immediate effect of the Reformation upon philosophy and freedom of thinking was one of constraint. The idea of such liberality as that which prevailed in Italy and Germany under the Medici, Leo X, and Maximilian, was a thing entirely unknown among zealous Protestants of the sixteenth and of the first part of the seventeenth century."[2]

The ablest political writers of France and Germany seem to ascribe a much greater degree of real freedom to the majority of subjects under the temporal governments of the middle ages, than many persons will believe that they enjoyed; although, perhaps, in times when a general and consistent spirit of religion governed all degrees of the nations of Europe, there was, strictly speaking, no theory of administration answering to the heathen models of civil power; a consideration which should be urged in defence of old historians like Gregory of Tours, when they are condemned by such later writers as Fleury. Niebuhr, in a work referred to by one of his learned translators, has pointed out the great error of the moderns on this point: "We look," he says, "on the constitutions of the middle ages as

[1] Cours Hist. leçon III, 26. [2] Hist. of Lit. II, 62.

despotical, because there was no visible representative body emanating from the nation, while we hear of not a few acts of violence. Yet every corporation, as well as every individual, had the management of all their own affairs, without any interference from the prince; and the laws were transmitted from age to age as an inviolable inheritance. On the other hand, we look for freedom from an assembly that is to be elected in this way or in that way, and feel no concern at seeing, that with every step taken by legislation, some nook or other, in which the power of free agency had still been left us, is subjected to the control of a body of salaried placemen." In the middle ages, the iron hand of the civil power was not felt, as it has been lately in all the nations of the north, in restraining men from availing themselves of those great resources to promote piety and wisdom which were furnished by the Catholic Church. The cruelty of the modern governments of Europe, in not allowing men openly to profess obedience to the counsels which our Lord has left us in his Gospel; their extreme jealousy in legislating even against the holy habits, consecrated by religion, and associated with every idea of goodness and self-devotion, of faith and of sublime sanctity,—as if really they were afraid that a man, upon leaving his house, should ever meet with persons whose clothing would tell him that they had renounced the world, and that their lives were consecrated to God, that their only business was to instruct the poor, to tend the sick, and to console the dying; their oppressive interference in obstructing the private spiritual enjoyments of men, and even the general happiness of subjects,—at one time preventing the Church from acquiring property for the benefit of the poor, at another annulling legacies made in its favour; with barbarous violence suppressing the religious orders, and even confiscating all the goods

of the clergy, in order to please Jews, fanatics, and selfish calculators, who despise the people while they pretend to be their friends; with ignorant and insane cunning contriving means to undermine the power of that clergy who alone are the enlightened and steady advocates of the interests of the poor,—men to whom these very governments owe every truth, every good, every thing beautiful and sublime that they possess, and to the paralysing of whose efforts every want and difficulty which distress them ought to be ascribed;[1] persevering in the development of an infernal project to injure and destroy the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, taking counsel together, by day and by night, against the Lord and against his Christ,—was in those ages absolutely unknown. Such a tyranny, however it might pretend to spare and even favour the material interests of a people, which opposed the spiritual happiness of mankind, could not have been imagined in a religious age, when men were influenced by views of another world; that rage for legislation, the characteristic of later times, is a disease from which the ancient governments of Christendom were in a great measure free. Since the year 1789, the philosophers have given to France eight constitutions, about seven thousand legislators, and thirty thousand laws, dictated more or less by the spirit of destruction, injustice, spoliation, impiety, proscription, inconsistency, and barbarism. This multiplication of laws and of legislators must be ascribed wholly to the increase of light and march of knowledge; for before the sublime age of the Reformation, which first produced this desire of perfectibility, the world could only boast of having possessed about fifteen legislators. In the dark ages, our Christian governments seem to have acted

[1] Rubichon, de l'Action du Clergé, p. 290.

upon the principle extolled by Dion Cassius, where he says, "Custom is like a king, law is like a tyrant."

The Abbé de la Mennais observed, that so far was the Church from favouring arbitrary power, one of the rules of the Roman Index is especially directed against such books "as tend to favour political tyranny, and what are falsely called reasons of state, militating against the evangelical and Christian law." "Rulers should reflect upon the equality of all human conditions," says Pope Gregory the Great. "Our ancient fathers," he continues, "were not kings of men, but the guardians of flocks; and when God desired Noah and his sons to fill the earth, he added, 'And let the fear of you be upon all the beasts of the earth;' and, according to this command, the fear of man is not to be extended upon men. It is against nature to wish to be an object of fear to an equal, yet rulers must be feared; but this necessity must not fill them with pride, for they are to seek not their own glory, but the justice of their subjects."[1] These were the principles of government which were held by the holy ministers of the Catholic Church. Sophists, poets, generals, and Gallican doctors, might idolise the will of an earthly sovereign in the courts of Versailles; but Fénelon was obliged to conceal, in banishment and obscurity, his patriotism and his virtue. It must be remembered, besides, that the Christian monarchies of Europe were united with many institutions, which denoted the freedom of the elements out of which they had been originally composed. Such were the Diets of the kingdoms of Germany and Italy, the Parliaments of England, the Cortes of Spain, the Champ de Mars (Märzfeld) of the old Franks; all of which were rendered illustrious by the spirit of

[1] De Cura Pastorali, II, 6.

the eminent and heroic men who occasionally appeared in them. At the same time, the most ardent admirers of these assemblies will be obliged to confess, that they have had their dark periods of history, during which it would be in vain to look to them for any real services to the cause of freedom, justice, or humanity, any counsels or any deeds but such, to use a Thucydidean phrase, *οἷον ὄχλος φιλεῖ ποιεῖν*.[1]

One of the greatest tyrants that ever disgraced a nation was the parliament of Paris during many periods. There was the leagued parliament, the rebel parliament, the parliament falsifying public acts, dispensing with vows, and banishing the Jesuits (those illustrious men, symbolical, in the persecution they endure, of all wisdom and goodness and sanctity,) for not perjuring themselves, defying them to answer for themselves, and not allowing them to answer. Somewhat of this charge may be advanced also against other assemblies, of which we need not speak, "ne aperiamus mysteria." It is enough to repeat the words of Cicero, "that nothing is more uncertain than the commons, nihil obscurius voluntate hominum, nihil fallacius ratione tota comitiorum."[2] When those great institutions of ancient Europe were established, it is certain that legislators might have reckoned upon the influence of resources, the loss of which might totally alter the moral situation of men with regard to each other and to society. Without doubt, the secret of legislation is to maintain the public happiness, by preserving to each class, to each order, and to each individual, its rights, privileges, and due influence; for a state in which the laws are not equal to all, but only favour a part of the people, should not, as Plato observes, be called a state, but a faction.[3] But whether to

[1] Lib. IV, c. 28. [2] Pro L. Murena. [3] Leges, IV.

promote these great ends, uniformly and constantly, the ancient elements be not quite as essential as the form of the power which moulded them, is a question which, perhaps, had better be referred to the judgment of future ages. In the meanwhile, the chivalry of nature, as distinguished from the titled nobility of states, may perhaps be convinced that, following the example of its great guide, the holy Church, the time is come for it to leave political society to itself, which seems to reject all principles of generosity and honour and justice, and all divine influence; that its duty even is to take no part in the war of those who combat, the one for despotism, the other for anarchy.

Without presuming to undervalue the resources of modern wisdom, it may be allowable to affirm that, if a Socrates were to arise in these days, and to be a Christian, seeing that the whole foundation of social order, the whole theory of political science, all ideas of the origin, rule, and object of government, had been changed since the first establishment of Christian states, he would propose many questions, and require many short and precise answers, before he would admit that men, who hold the original principles, could consistently continue to advise or direct those rulers, who were sure to reject them; though, as a Christian, he would have been the last to deny that the duty of obeying them, "ubi Deo contraria non præcipit homo," remains the same as in the first age of Christianity. Where rash or ignorant practitioners are administering palliatives that are more dangerous to the life than the disease of the patient, a wise physician will not remain, if he be convinced that his counsels are not to prevail.

In conclusion of the whole subject, relative to the connexion of chivalry with government, it will be sufficient to remember that no form is absolutely

incompatible with the existence of that spirit, excepting despotism or anarchy. Under every other system, whatever may become of rulers and of their ministers, there is no time so miserable but a man may be true; but when a military or legal despotism, that still more extreme evil,[1] being the state which results from the democratic doctrines, is once suffered to prevail, the spirit of chivalry must then withdraw from all view of the world; for otherwise, were it to form a close alliance with what would infallibly act as poison to its purity, as a weight and obstacle to its independence, its warmest friends would soon be obliged to confess that indeed its age was then passed, and that nothing remained but "to throw over it the sanctity of death."[2]

XXII. This must suffice for a prologue; and I hope that nothing of importance has been omitted or left obscure. We have taken a general view of chivalry, as far as relates to its essential spirit in every age, and to the philosophy which must always belong to it. We have seen that certain leading principles, at variance with many positions which are now maintained by men who profess to teach wisdom, are inseparable from that philosophy, although, perhaps, the ardent admirers of chivalry will disdain such a mode of representing it; and will demand, in the words of Cicero, "Quid opus est in hoc philosophari, cum rem non magnopere philosophia egere videamus?"[3] The limits might, perhaps, have been still further extended, and the abstract theory of the whole more fully developed; but of this enough. Perhaps we have allowed the learning of degree, or the science of nobility, to occupy already too much of our attention; for these subjects are of the lowest interest among all those which are

[1] Aristot. Polit. lib. V, c. 8. [2] Guesses at Truth.
[3] Tuscul. Quæst. lib. I.

connected with chivalry: it is only through a feeling of respect for the virtue of past ages, that one may condescend to approach them; like very light wine, which, when mixed with water, is good for nothing, so, as Cicero says of something similar, "ista magis gustata quam potata delectant."

In the succeeding books we shall be occupied upon the detail of chivalry, as beheld in operation, upon the sublime principles with which it has become connected, and upon the manners to which it has given rise; shewing in general how far the anticipations delivered in the first book were answered in the heroic age of our history.

The advantage of impressing the mind with an admiration for the high scenes which will be illustrated in the following books, must be acknowledged by every man who thinks, with a great English philosopher, that "whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses,—whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present —advances us in the scale of rational beings." There are, indeed, matter-of-fact persons, who will call in question the motives, and deny the reality of the virtues which we shall ascribe to the ancient chivalry of Europe. These belong to a class of men which is always numerous:

Δύσζηλοι γάρ τ' εἰμὲν ἐπὶ χθονὶ φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων.[1]

There are men who have no sense of any beauty, who are not delighted by the lofty summits of trees, but by their roots and fibres; but the unhappy influence of the system which was established on the abolition of the ancient faith, has multiplied them beyond measure. "This is all fine coin," they say to us, "it is a pity that it will not pass in the world; this is all admirable, but how can it be true?" One

[1] Hom. Od. VII, 307.

of the great and deadly evils consequent upon the modern philosophy is, the prevalence of such inductions; it has effaced the beautiful images of virtue, which had such power to ennoble the imagination and to soothe and correct the heart; which could yield refreshment to the world-wearied flesh of age, and give wings to youth, enabling it to escape to the ocean of perfect beauty, and taste by anticipation some degree of the happiness which reigns in the elysium of God; poor shadows of that blissful region, they were fledged and strengthened to fly hence, and rest upon its never-withering banks of flowers, where they were no more with mortal accidents opprest. In a religious point of view, it has too often deprived the moderns of one of the great modes employed by divine Providence in leading men to truth, which is by granting them the benefit of good example; for upon many of them the example of the saints and Christian heroes is wholly lost; it is an offence, a scandal, or a mystery to them. Wherever the modern poets of England allude, like Thomson, Goldsmith, and Cowper, to the state and manners of Catholic countries, they betray a degree of ignorance or of malevolence, which calls for astonishment, or rather for pity; and if this infection can thus prevail over the poetic mind, what may not be expected from the gloomy discourses of untravelled pedants? It is no wonder that they suppose faithful Christians to be actuated by quite different motives from those which belong to Catholics; nay, by motives which are far more ignoble than those inculcated by Aristotle and Plato, and other heathen philosophers. "Nihil enim olet ex Academia, nihil ex Lyceo, nihil ne e puerilibus quidem disciplinis!" They teach that a wicked man seeks his own advantage in the present world, and that a saint has regard to his own interest hereafter; so that both have the same end in view,

as far as loving only themselves. They have lost the power of appreciating the graces and dispositions of the spiritual life, which are as strange and incredible among them as they were among the Romans in the days of Pliny and Tacitus. They cannot distinguish the fervour of Catholic piety, to which they owe all the magnificent monuments that adorn their country, from the extravagance of their own unhappy fanatics, which is never so well satisfied as when it is engaged in destroying them; and they produce their deliberate views of both, to proclaim the danger of one and the same enthusiasm.[1] Regularity and attention to the least duties indicate weakness of character and superstition; uncompromising fidelity to the Church of Jesus Christ is a proof of bigotry and intolerance, or perhaps, as with the first Christians, of being afflicted with a hatred of the human race; to love retirement, and to avoid the endless assemblies of the luxurious world, is to be misanthropical and morbid; to lead a simple life, according to the early hours and natural discipline which belong to incorrupt times, is to be eccentric and fond of singularity; to be unmoved at injuries is to want proper feeling, or else it is only a mode of concealing a deep and bad sentiment against others; humility is an artifice of pride and self-love; the choice of a penitential spirit in the circumstances of life is supposed to proceed from being mean-spirited and timid; to be temperate and abstemious is to be sordid and avaricious; to be bountiful in alms is the policy of a religion which could not stand without such contrivance; to be active in benefiting the poor is to be artful and ambitious, seeking only how to rise the higher; to love Christians of every country is to want patriot-

[1] The learned bishop's treatise, entitled "The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared," must be read with peculiar interest in the library of York Cathedral.

ism, or else it is a disgusting affectation; to dislike debate and contention is to be conscious of being in the wrong and to fear detection; to prepare for death like a Catholic Christian, according to the solemn injunctions of the Church, is to forget the first maxim of a rational religion—"live well, and die as you can; let not the thoughts of death taint all the bewitching pleasures of life." It is not strange that the virtues of the old heroic character should be denied, when it is with such dispositions men regard the lives of the saints and of those who endeavour to follow them. It is true, holy men may rejoice in being thus concealed and delivered from the world's praise; but in a lower point of view it may be allowable to suggest, that if this misbelief and distrust are to be the consequence of our acquaintance with letters, it had been better for ourselves and better for society, as far as we can influence it, if we had remained in what the world is pleased to call ignorance. With such persons I have no desire to dispute:

——— from such a contest
Cowardice pursues and valour flies.

Were it possible to fancy for a moment that their criticism was founded upon justice, their influence and application would not the less indicate a no small degree of wrong-headedness and folly. Let it be ideal; it is more satisfying to the heart than your delusive realities: I will continue to watch its congenial course,

——— et inanem prosequar umbram.

If any one should object to the matter of the following books, that it cannot in every particular instance be shewn to be true, I would refer him to the advice of St. Augustin, when he speaks of a pagan who would not become a Christian because

he could detect imperfections in those who professed religion. "When exhorted to believe, he says, 'Do you desire me to be like this man or that?' and he names this or that person, and sometimes he speaks the truth; but when it cannot be the truth, what great trouble is there in calumny?" "Sed tu," adds St. Augustin, "noli deficere; quod ille quærit, tu esto. Esto bonus Christianus, ut convincas calumniosum Paganum."[1] And, moreover, have I not even the grave historian's principle to justify a belief in what may be questioned? "Let us have faith in fine actions," says M. de la Cretelle, "and let us reserve doubt and incredulity for bad." Why should we heed their ungenerous insinuation, that all virtue is but delusion; that heroes were in fact cowards, and saints no wiser or more virtuous than the vulgar class of mankind; that the worthies of old were only successful deceivers; that "the salt of the earth" was but hypocrisy? For wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile; but what Christian, what gentleman, will deign to deny such base positions, when the reply is provided even by a heathen—"it is better to be deceived than to distrust"? "Satius est decipi quam diffidere." Where was the poet's confidence when exposed to the persecution of a tyrant? It was in the power which was left him of enjoying such images:

Cæsar in hoc potuit juris habere nihil.

Where did the sweet bard of gentle deeds find refreshment and strength? It was in the fairy land of his imagination. Here too the man of virtue and religion may find a place for his weary soul. To these pages, rich with the record of honour and of grandeur, proudly adorned with the images of the saintly and the great, he may retire from the infec-

[1] Serm. XV, § 6.

tion of a base multitude, and feast in the company of kings; and here too I, like him of old, who sang,

——— nigh ravisht with rare thought's delight,
My tedious travel do forget thereby,
And when I 'gin to feel decay of might,
It strength to me supplies, and cheers my dulled spright.

How beautifully is the same expressed in the language of minstrelsy!

Ambition's dream I've seen depart,
Have rued of penury the smart,
Have felt of grief the venom'd dart,
When hope was flown;
Yet rests one solace to my heart—
My harp alone.

True, it may be impossible to produce one example of absolute perfection; but where is the absurdity of viewing the collective graces of reproachless chivalry? Are not even the infinite treasures of holiness dispensed but in part to separate mortals? In St. Boniface, for example, was it not the spirit of St. Peter which converted the Germans; in St. Anschar, the Apostle of the North, did it not seem more the inextinguishable love of St. John which imparted the principle of life to men? And are the heroic virtues of chivalry to be reproved as incredible because they were not vouchsafed to any one individual in undivided fulness? or is it not allowable to form a conception of that fulness, and to hold forth the form of its purity and of its grandeur?

When Cicero employed his eloquence in representing the qualities of a perfect orator, he did not merely describe the sweetness of Isocrates, the subtilty of Lysias, the sharpness of Hyperides, the sound of Æschines, the force of Demosthenes, but he united these qualities in imagination, and exhibited

that faultless pattern of all oratorical excellence which was to be the admiration and the guide of future orators. What law forbids our imitating this example when we treat of chivalry? Although these books will want that spirit through which the same things appear greater when they are acted than when they are only described in writing, yet perhaps the general impression resulting from them collectively will be such as corresponds to no one man who ever lived: for we do not seek who merits such undivided praise, but to behold that chivalry than which nothing can be more pure and lofty and honourable, which may have been never fully possessed by one person, but only imparted in various degrees to many; for there is nothing in any kind so beautiful but that the image from which it is expressed as it were from a certain mouth is still more beautiful; which can be perceived neither by the eyes, nor by the ears, nor by any of the senses, but can be apprehended only by reflection in the mind. "We can conceive," says Cicero,[1] "something still more beautiful than the statue of Phidias, although we behold nothing in any kind more beautiful. The artist, when he formed it, did not contemplate any one figure of whom he drew the resemblance, but there was in his mind a form of beauty which animated his genius and directed his hand." In like manner it is in the mind that we must seek for that form of perfect chivalry to which whatever is subjected to the sense must be referred. Let us, therefore, investigate, if we can, that which Froissart and Tasso never saw, or which, perhaps, no one altogether ever possessed; which, if we shall not be able to imitate and express, it will be in our power at least to describe according to the reproachless excellence of its nature. We hold him, there-

[1] Orator, 5.

fore, whom we seek, but in the mind; for if I should seize him with my hand, there is no adventurous quest which should separate him from me. The flower of chivalry is found which Froissart never beheld. Who is this, then? you will ask. It is he who has the piety of Tancred, the purity of Perceval, the courtesy of Gawain, the valour of Orlandus, the honour of Bayard, the humility of Godfrey. You will say, perhaps, that there never was a man who united every grace. Perhaps never; for we investigate what we desire, not what we behold; and we return, therefore, to that Platonic form of perfection which we can at least conceive, if we are not able to behold it: for we do not search for a knight, nor for any thing mortal and frail, but for that chivalry itself whence every knight must derive whatever degree of chivalry he may possess. And there is no praise of which, in these examples that follow, there will not be found, if not the fulness, at least the desire and the adumbration: we do not attain to it, but still we shall behold it; we do not speak of men, but of things; and so far are we from being satisfied with what we express, that not even the presence of Tancred would content us, since we desire something immense, infinite, and eternal.

Let not men, therefore, condemn us when we behold with an enthusiastic rapture the scenes and objects which are symbolical of what so justly merits the highest praise; and, above all things, let them not take the trouble to point out the extravagance of the outward mould, or the weakness of the scaffolding: we are not concerned with stone walls, or with the mere bones and ashes of the dead; with the intrinsic value of the oak, whose boughs are mossed with age, and high top bald with dry antiquity. What we contemplate is faultless and vivifying and fruitful. Cicero has feelingly described the pleasure with which we visit the places

which were once consecrated by the presence of great men, or rendered eminent by the fable of heroic times. The ancients could never visit too often the illustrious Rhodes, or Mitylene, or Ephesus, the walls of Corinth commanding two seas, or Thebes renowned as the seat of Bacchus, or Delphi as that of Apollo, or Thessalian Tempe. But why must we join the thoughtless crowd of wanderers who flock to classic land, possessed with what Cicero terms "tam insolens domesticarum rerum fastidium,"[1] when we can behold in England, France, Spain, Germany, and Italy, the towers of our generous and heroic ancestors? With what delight should we view those majestic remains of the last heroic world! Time would fail me to describe Arques and Falaise; the castle of Hauteville, near Coutances in Normandy, the seat of the illustrious Tancred; that of Rohan and Clisson, on the beautiful banks of the Loire; the dark fearful walls of Lusignan, near Poitiers; Coucy, in Picardy; the tower of the Constable at Vannes, in which Clisson was treacherously imprisoned by Montfort; the castle of Josselin, with the chamber in which Clisson would have slain his own daughter for advising him to murder the children of his enemy Montfort; the proud tower of Montlhéry;[2] or the castle of Gozon, in Languedoc, in which the stone was preserved that Dieudonné de Gozon, grand master of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, found in the skull of the dragon which he slew at the foot of St. Stephen's Mount.[3] Can an Englishman be unmoved at Créci, when he beholds the tower of Edward, on the hill

[1] De Finibus, I, 4.

[2] Of which Louis le Gros said on his death-bed to his son, "Garde bien ce château; il m'a fait blanchir les cheveux avant le temps."

[3] Monumens des Grands Maitres de l'Ordre de St. Jean de Jerusalem, par M. le Vicomte de Villeneuve Bargemont, I, 144.

three leagues north of Abbeville, from which Edward III surveyed the army, and suspended the great standard of England on that memorable day? Can a poet find no interest in Roussillon, where he may view the castle of Rossello, in which Guillaume de Cabestaing served as a page, being the first stage in his melancholy fate? Can an historian traverse Languedoc, and not love to wander among the ruins of those old castles whose subterraneous passages of vast length are said to have been constructed by Hunald of Aquitaine during his wars with Charlemagne? Can a hero forget that in Dauphiné may be seen the Vallée Chevalereuse, so called from the number of its noble towers, and the fame of its ancient pomps and tournaments?[1] Can a Christian traverse Spain, and not dissolve in tears when shewn at Mora, between Badajos and Cadiz, the aged ruins of some castle which, in days of yore, afforded shelter from the fury of the Moors? Will he not penetrate through the mountains of Biscay to visit the castle of Loyola, in order to behold the chamber in which St. Ignatius was born, where, like the Duke of Gandia, he may fall on his knees to kiss the floor and render thanks to God for having given to the world such a champion of truth? Are the vestiges of the Persian invaders of Greece more associated with images of heroic chivalry in defence of ancestral tombs and domestic hearths than the palace of the Alhambra at Grenada, once the favourite residence of the Moorish kings of Spain? Who can describe the wonderful architecture of its curious gates and oriental halls, its courts of the lions emblazoned with the symbols of Mahometan superstition, and still exhibiting the mottos of those misbelieving kings; its gardens and fountains and baths, raising the idea rather of some enchanted

[1] Chorier, Hist. Générale du Dauphiné, VIII, 240.

paradise or fairy land, or some submarine grotto of the Nereides, than any earthly habitation of men? Well may Granada be the theme of heroic poets. "Cadiz has its palms, and Murcia its groves of orange; Jaen its gothic palace, and Agreda its convent built by St. Edmond"; Llers has its embattled crown, and Cordova its stupendous mosque; Valencia has its belfreys of three hundred churches, and Pampeluna its girdle of towers; but Granada has the Alhambra.[1] Do the monuments of the Grand Masters of the order of St. John of Jerusalem impart no increase of interest to Malta? And does the tower of St. Nicholas confer no additional glory upon Rhodes? Nay, within the bounds of our own island, what numberless remains present themselves on all sides, abounding in romantic and heroic interest to fire the chosen genius! Witness Winchester and Windsor, Camelot[2] and Caerlleon,[3] Bamborough and Berwick, the Castle Orgillous and the Joyeuse Garde of romance, to the former of which Sir Lancelot's body was borne, though some say that it was to Alnwick. The castle of Lacken appears old enough to have seen the Argonauts, if we are to credit Orpheus that they sailed by these shores of Ierne. On the northern coast of Cornwall the walls of Tintagel Castle on its rocky peninsula may still be seen, though the land of Lyonnois or Leonnoys, the birth-place of Tristan, is now forty fathoms under water; this castle of tin had six stories, and the lady to whom it belonged was an enchantress.[4] Are not even many of our sweet meadows and our never-failing brooks immortalised by the muse of history? What beauty in the terraced height, the ancestral grove of heroes dear to fame, the softly swelling hills, the ivy-mantled tower washed by the

[1] Victor Hugo, les Orientales.
[2] In Somersetshire.
[3] In Monmouthshire.
[4] Perceforest, 1.

silver stream, the hoary cloister, and the level lawn! Ah, what sorrow glooms that parting day which calls us from our native walks! or from the place where our gravest hours were passed with gentle comrades, only feeling a restraint which was to sweeten liberty!

> Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
> Seats of our youth, when every sport could please!

To distant climates chivalry may sometimes point the way, and every high scene of the majestic world may be dear to fancy; pride too may love to collect the evening groups to tell of all that has been felt and seen:

> ——— ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει
> πατρίδος ἐρᾶν ἅπαντος· ὃς δ' ἄλλως λέγει,
> λόγοισι χαίρει, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἐκεῖσ' ἔχει.

It is not merely right, and a duty, it is of necessity; his tongue may recount the wonders and the beauties of a foreign land, but, oh! his heart is there. But others too have their native hills, and their memorials of ancestral chivalry, to which, wherever they roam, their fancy fondly turns. Perhaps it is the Germans above all who have reason to be proud of the monuments of our heroic age. Who can behold the stupendous arches and the vast dome of the Danzigers, or the gigantic tower which contains the immense hall of Marienburg, the castle and chief capital of the Teutonic knights, or the majestic ruins of Eilau, which once employed 20,000 men in building, without a feeling of reverence for those past ages which could produce such works? Still some fragments are to be seen at Ingelheim, the favourite castle of that mighty emperor whose dominion extended from Palermo to the Baltic, and from the Ebro to Raab. Here stood that palace with its hundred gates, and hundred marble columns,

which had been brought from Ravenna, whose walls glittered with gold and jewels, and resounded with the clang of arms and the song of the minstrel.[1] Nor is it with less interest that the Germans may visit Germersheim, where the glorious Rudolph of Hapsburg ended his days in peace and happiness with his beloved wife, the beautiful Agnes of Burgundy, or the castle of Wartburg, from which St. Elizabeth walked down to Eisenach, where she took refuge in the church of the friars. The Pfalzgrafenstein, on the rocky island in the Rhine, is still a monument to remind the powerful and great, that there is something more powerful in the world than their greatness and policy; for it was here that the Pfalzgraf Conrad of Suabia resolved to bestow the beautiful Agnes upon some relative of the Emperor Henry VI, that the inheritance of the palatinate might enter into the imperial house; but Henry of Brunswick, with no other recommendation but a noble person and an heroic spirit, being favoured by her mother, was enabled to disappoint this scheme of ambition, and became the husband of Agnes, and lord of this castle. Who has not felt his spirits warmed with a wild romantic glow, when, passing between the embattled towers which crest the beautiful winding banks of this majestic river, he has listened to each venturous tale of "the brothers," the knights of Sternfels and Liebenstein, Counts John of Spanheim and Werner of Greiffenklau; of Hans Brömser of Rüdesheim, who, after thrice breaking his vow, and being delivered by divine mercy, founded the church of Nothgottes, whose chains are still to be seen at Rüdesheim; and of Gilgen von Lorch, who, on his premature return from the crusade, so fatally delivered his wife from the robber's castle, and whose

[1] Vogt, Rheinische Geschichte, I, 114.

saddle is still to be seen at Lorch? Who can do justice in report to the beautiful embattled heights of Johannisberg, with the ruins of the majestic Ehrenfels; to the deep pool and gloomy towers of Bingen, with all their historic and romantic charms; to the grey ruins of Schönberg, with its legend of the seven virgins; to the solemn Lurlei, still endued with something of unearthly sound? What silent poetry is found in the terraced heights of the knightly Rheinfels, memorable for the misfortunes of Count Philip; in the ruins of Thurnberg, the work and grave of the mighty Kunos; in the ancestral towers of the Katzenellenbogen; in the very aspect of Coblentz, fronted by the noble Ehrenbreitstein! What heroic images are recalled upon beholding Reichenberg, marvellous for oriental pomp, and still resounding with the glories of the crusade, and the deeds of surpassing chivalry which were achieved by its illustrious founders! Is there not an air of heroic grandeur, a high romantic interest, associated with the towers of Nassau, which gave title to the old house of Luxemburg; with Reinhartsbrunn, where you see the grave of Ludwig IV and his spouse Juta; with Solms, the seat of another historical race; with the knightly Stolzenfels; with the beautiful plain of Maifeld, renowned for its ancient assemblies of the free German people; with Kunoberg, under St. Goar, the castle of the heroic Kuno; with Irenberg, where that beauty lay, the cynosure of neighbouring eyes, for whom so many noble knights, Diether von Staffel, Johann von Heinesbach, Hauptmann von Limburg, and a hundred others, would have died; with those seven hills, each crowned with its castle, whose name recalled an image of chivalry; with that stately fortress of Hammerstein, above Andernach, whose origin no history records, though some traditions ascribe it to Charles Martel, to the lofty Grimberg,

near Treves; with the stupendous Stackelberg; with the fearful Rothenberg of the Odenwald? Do we wish to recall only the romantic history of an illustrious line? What scene more favourable than under the walls of Hundsburg near Löwenstein, the cradle of that ancient family, von Hund, of whose origin there is so interesting a report? Are we for visiting one of those convertites like Duke Frederick, who forsakes his pompous court for the cloistered shade—from whom, as Shakspeare says, "there is so much matter to be heard and learned"—behold the castle of Argentine in the Lyonnais, which had been changed by its lord into a convent; visit the castle of Gandia, where a grandee of Spain maintained his immense household in the order and sanctity of a bishop's palace, so that it was the admiration of all Spain;[1] or view the ruins of Chantilly, where the great Condé ended his days in retirement and the practice of penitence, resembling that of a cloister. But where could we find a castle or palace of the middle ages which would not recall the memory of some saint, or at least one of those convertites? Do we desire a tale of maternal affection, and a monument of ancient faith? Let us repair to Bischoffzell, on the river Thur; for here formerly lived a noble widow with two sons. It happened once that these two young men went across the river, on a hunting party, and during their absence the waters of the river suddenly rose in a manner not unusual in that country. On returning, the daring youths, being resolved to proceed home, dashed into the stream, hoping to stem its violence, but both were swept away and drowned. The sorrowful widow caused this bridge to be erected over the spot, and ordained that every one who passed over it should say a pater-

[1] Vie de St. François de Borgia, tom. I, p. 138.

noster for the repose of the souls of her children.[1] Or would we invite black-winged dreams, and give, as it were, our hand to those once writ in dark misfortune's book? It is not in romance alone that we meet with the "castle pluere," the weeping castle, and with the child of sorrowful birth, Sir Tristan. They may be often found in real scenes, with power to soften all eyes but those of flinty men, who never weep but through lust and laughter; here are scenes to beguile us of our tears, as they speak of some distressful stroke that youth has suffered. Witness the dark vaults of Dürrenstein and Chillon, of Pontefract and Fotheringay, of Berkeley and Conway. Here is Donauwerth, where the black seal sent to Count Henry involved the innocent Maria in calamity, which pursued her to death; and Daoulas, fatal to the Viscount de Faou. Here is Chateau-Gaillard on the Seine (which cost the king of France more time, troops, and money to subdue, than the whole province of Normandy), where Marguerite, queen of Navarre, was strangled, and where Blanche of Burgundy languished in long captivity. Here is the imperial summit of Hohenstaufen, recalling the fate of that illustrious family which rose to a splendour above that of all earthly princes, only to sink down suddenly, and vanish in the blackest night. But even independent of all such associations, what varied beauty in these monuments of our heroic ages, of which, alas! we may say in the words of Lucan, alluding to Troy, "etiam periere ruinæ." How solemn are those dark towers, "bosom'd high in tufted trees," which rise above the plains of England! those embattled masses which crown the hills of the giants on the borders of Bohemia! No wonder that many of these castles, cresting high peaks of rock, should

[1] Die Schweiz in ihren Ritterburgen und Bergschlössern, 102.

have seemed like the work of enchantment, when beheld at the rising of the sun, with their long exterior galleries glittering with the armour of those who kept watch, so that the whole seemed as if lighted up with living flames!—or entered on a night, at midnight, when there were found posterns open towards the sea, and without any keeping, while the moon shone clear! All these are scenes which abound with beauty, and every kind of interest, for those who hold that we too have our heroic history, and images of ancestral fame. We need not pass the ocean for the graves of illustrious dead, and the tombs of heroes:

ἔνθα μὲν Αἴας κεῖται ἀρήϊος, ἔνθα δ' Ἀχιλλεὺς,
ἔνθα δὲ Πάτροκλος.[1]

Under our knightly ruins the husbandman will discover the rust-eaten weapons, and the empty helmets:

Grandiaque effossis mirabitur ossa sepulcris.

And here, as well as when beholding the ruins of Ægina and of Megara, of the Piræus and of Corinth, the philosopher reflects upon the transitory nature of all human greatness:

Reliquias veterumque videt monumenta virorum.

How affecting are the words of Sir Thomas Malory, when, in the conclusion of his history, he leads his reader to behold, as it were, the tombs of the great personages with whose lives and glory he has made him so familiarly acquainted! "O ye myghty and pompous lordes, shynynge in the glory transytory of thys unstable lyf, as in reignynge over realmes grete and myghte countreyes, fortyfyed wyth stronge

[1] Od. III, 109.

castels and toures, edified with many a ryche cyte! Ye also ye fyers and myghty chyvalers, soo valyaunte in aventurous dedes of armes, behold, behold, see how thys myghty conquerour Kyng Arthur, whom in his humayne lyf all the worlde doubted, ye also this noble Quene Guenever, that somtyme sate in her chare adourned wyth golde, perles, and precyous stones, now lye ful lowe in obscure fosse or pytte, covered wyth cloddes of erth and claye. Behold also thys myghty champyon Launcelot, pyerless of knyghthode, see now how he lyeth grovelynge on the colde moulde, now beynge soo feble and faynt that somtyme was so terrible: how and in what manere oughte ye to be so desyrous of the mondayn honour so daungerous." But there are other feelings excited by these scenes. What Englishman will turn aside from that castle where once a British monarch was a prisoner; and what lover of chivalry can ascend that tower, or pace that small chamber, which once confined the lion-hearted Richard, without enthusiasm and awe? It was a lovely evening in August when I beheld the delicious view which is obtained from the heights above the castle. The sun was setting over the Danube, which rolled in many a channel between gloomy forests, which were tinged with a hue of the richest purple. The pencil of Claude could not have done justice to the landscape:

> It was a scene, at least to me,
> A fate allows but seldom here;
> One of those rare and brilliant hours,
> Which, like the aloe's lingering flowers,
> May blossom to the eye of man
> But once in all his weary span!

It would seem as if the people of that heroic land had retained a peculiar love for whatever was symbolical of chivalry. Visitors of all ranks are in the habit of frequenting the romantic spot which I have

been describing. Some spend a night in the prison. The Prince Lichtenstein is very attentive to the preservation of the ancient castles which are in his possession. The castle of Chivalry, in the gardens of Laxenburg, is a proof of the taste which distinguishes the present emperor. In this edifice, which he caused to be erected upon an island in a lake, after the model of a castle in the middle ages, there is collected and admirably disposed a vast variety of valuable antiquities, which have been removed from different castles of the empire; memorials which perhaps would otherwise have perished if not thus collected. The castle is approached by a movable bridge; passing under a portcullis, and through the court of offices, you arrive at the inner gate. The apartments are small, disposed and furnished in the ancient style. The ceilings and wainscot, the doors and window-frames are, in many instances, five hundred years old. The treasures of the chapel belonged to Rudolph of Hapsburg. In one apartment various pieces of his furniture are deposited: there are numerous paintings of coronations and tournaments. In the armory are several figures of knights and ladies in steel armour. In order that fearful contrasts may serve as a foil, a chamber of justice is represented, disposed for the interrogation of prisoners, whose bodies are drawn up by a cord from the dungeon beneath, so that their head appears through a round aperture in the table, around which the examiners are seated. A narrow winding flight of steps leads the visitor to the dungeon, where he beholds the figure of a knight templar in chains. The prisoner lifts up his hands as you enter, and his chains clash as they resume their former position. Years may pass away, but the memory of the writer can never lose the feeling of that hour, when, upon arriving at the lake which surrounds the castle of Sigismunds-

burg (it is situated between Nassereit and Lermoos, in the Tyrol), he swam across to the island, and mounted the castle-wall. It was a tranquil hour: the moon shone bright, and not a sound met the ear but the ripple of the gentle wave receding from his stroke. The lake must be of prodigious depth, for the mountains rise abruptly from every side. At first one might have supposed that this was the very isle of the bottomless lake which belonged to the giant Almadrago, the grandfather of Dramuziando, of whom we read so much in the Palmerin of England. The similarity of situation was most striking. Certainly it did seem a fathomless pool; and if conversant with the Muse of northern waters, fancy might well conceive it to be the abode of the water-sprite, and hear his cry,—a fearful note to one who was about to plunge into it, though ever so young and daring.

> ——— Juvat ô meminisse beati
> Temporis!

Yes! to remember the adventures of an innocent and happy time, yet of a time which should never be spoken of as past for those who cherish chivalry, since there is no difference between the young in years and the young in character;[1] for though the arms which once slew the Nemæan lion may become sinewless, though the fleshly frame may wither and dissolve, the soul, which gave movement and beauty and joy, is insensible to change; she still may spread her gladsome wings, and mount sublime above the grisly band which ministers to death. The poor infirm wandering minstrel was able to proclaim this truth:

> And said I that my limbs were old,
> And said I that my blood was cold

[1] Aristot. Ethic. Nicom. lib. I, c. 3.

> And that my kindly fire was fled,
> And my poor wither'd heart was dead—

and that I might not sing of chivalry! How could I prove so foul, so false a recreant to the dearest theme? How could I hear that very name pronounced, and not wake my heart to notes of fire! Yes, the orb of purest light, which visits to rejoice the human soul, for him repairs the golden flood, and warms him with redoubled ray. Perhaps during a short interval it may have been obscured by darksome vapours, but for him it has not been quenched; for when hope, the child of unimpaired remembrance, resumes its reign, reviving those scenes and adventures of youth,—the hasty ride over the dusty plain,

> Eheu, quantus equis, quantus adest viris
> Sudor!

or the sterner course, when night comes on, and the bleak storm begins to ruffle, where for many miles about there is scarce a bush; when castles topple on their warders' heads, and the winds do fight against the churches; when, at length, dismounting at the abbey-gate, he is admitted within the sounding cloister, now only seen at intervals by sheets of fire, fearful with the bursts of horrid thunder and with the groans of roaring elements; when he beholds the tranquil countenance of the holy monk who so gently thanks the stranger;—then the return to the raftered hall, to the cheerful hearth, to the friends whose remembrance sweetened danger, and whose presence made every "dear scene of enchantment more dear," to that beloved paternal mansion where every chamber brings back to his mind's eye the revered forms of father and of mother, the fond traits of fraternal friendship and of a sister's love,—dear familiar roof, of which he can truly say, in the

words of Penelope, speaking of the house of Ulysses, which she is about to leave,

τοῦ ποτε μεμνήσεσθαι ὀΐομαι, ἔνπερ ὀνείρῳ.

Oh, then he still lives in the sweet land of poetry, in the grand days of knighthood; the little world of his soul, unmoved by the progress and decline of all around it, is again in its heroic age; nature, manners, even language, are all restored to the freshness and majesty of a primal state; the ear is no longer wounded by the ignoble sounds from all sides of policy and interest, of profit and advantage; but now discourse is like rich music's voice; it is of honour, goodness, self-devotion, dignity, friendship—"thoughts that breathe, and words that burn":

> The heart, now pregnant with celestial fire,
> Wakes into ecstacy the living lyre.

The dark melancholy phantoms which are generated in the stagnant veins of a decrepit state are passed away, and already forgotten. Now is again "the breezy call of incense-breathing morn." The portals of temples are unbarred; the earth is again walked by heroes: no more substitution of laws for virtue, of expediency for honour; no more tributes to the monster of false civilisation; no more offerings of plain and holy innocence to wicked shame; no more crimes defended as necessities of position; no more apostasies under the name of concessions; no more fear of a Procrustes and of his cursed ded, since Theseus is again alive to deliver men from his tyranny: the age of indifference is gone! the age of sophistry, of selfishness, of melancholy, of suspicion, of despair. In the joy of so great a deliverance, he forgets that he perhaps had once yielded to its influence; that he too had been without energy and without peace; that he too had been bound

down and measured upon the frame of men's opinion; that his confidence had given place to suspicion; that his heart had been divided; that he had grown attached to the prison of his soul, to the very maladies and shame of a world-worn nature. Dissolved in the harmony of eternal youth, time has no warning voice for him, age no power. How can he grow old who lives separated from all that is destined to decay and perish, who unceasingly beholds the same bright altars and angelic forms which proclaim his own eternity? How can he think of change and death, surrounded by visions of empyrean day? How can he remember what belongs to age, who already consorts with never-fading crowns? For him all things are immortal; and therefore, like Crassus, he cannot suppose that he himself is old; he may repeat in a higher sense the very words of the Roman, "me senem esse sum oblitus."

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